






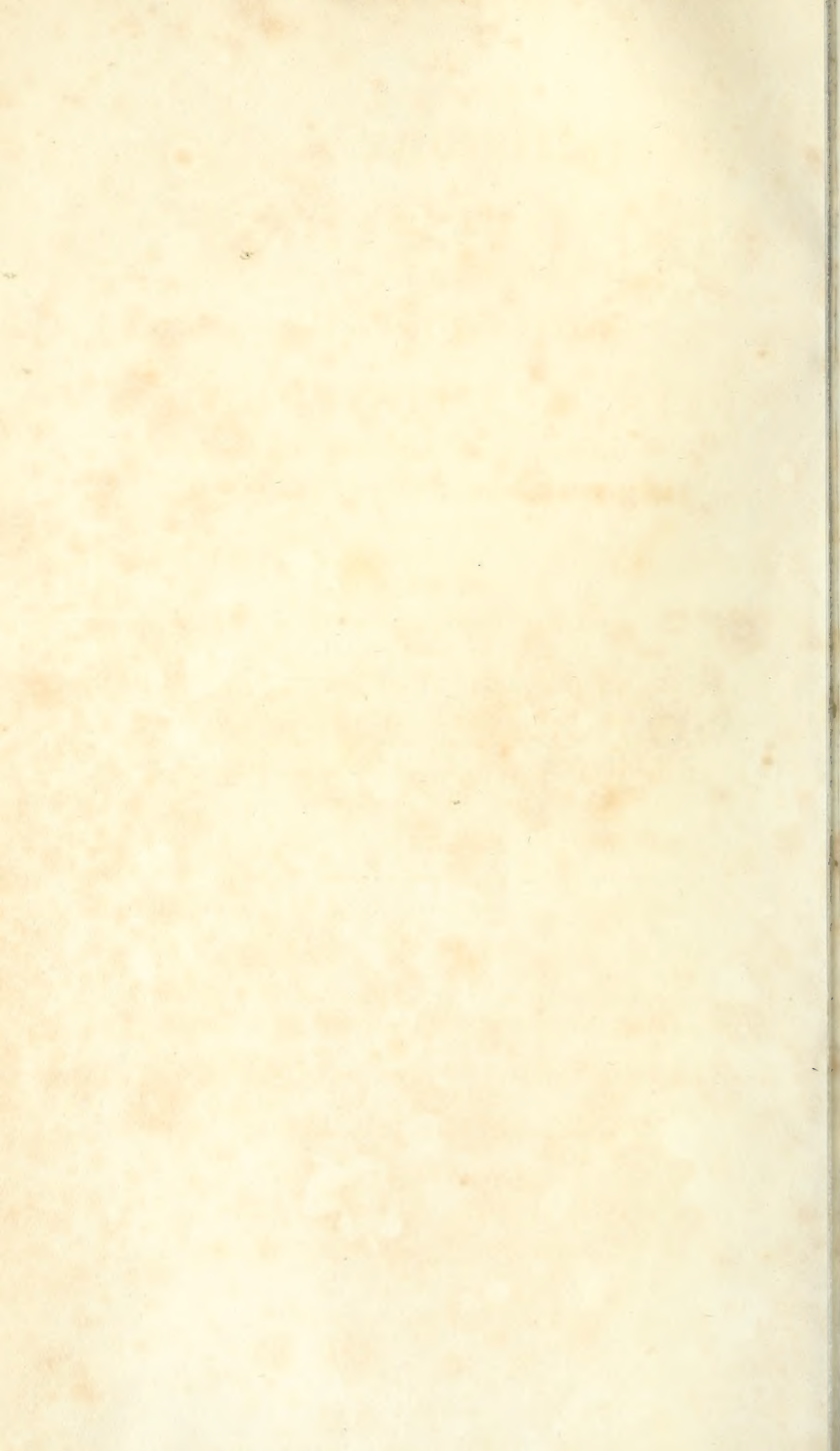
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A
HISTORY
OF
THE CAMPAIGNS
OF THE
BRITISH FORCES
IN
SPAIN AND PORTUGAL,

Undertaken to relieve those Countries
FROM THE FRENCH USURPATION;
COMPREHENDING
MEMOIRS OF THE OPERATIONS OF THIS INTERESTING
WAR,
CHARACTERISTIC REPORTS
OF THE
SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE TROOPS,
AND
ILLUSTRATIVE ANECDOTES OF
Distinguished Military Conduct in Individuals,
Whatever their Rank in the Army.

Tros tyriusve mihi nullo discrimine agetor. VIRG.

VOL. V.

VIEWS OF THE CAMPAIGN, OF THE ALLIES AND THE ENEMY.
MILITARY-DIPLOMATIC NEGOCIATION OF MARQUIS
WELLESLEY.
RETIREMENT OF THE BRITISH ARMY TO THE PORTUGUESE
FRONTIER.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR T. GODDARD,

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1814.

HISTORY
OF
THE CAMPAIGNS
OF THE
BRITISH FORCES
IN
SPAIN AND PORTUGAL

DESCENDING TO THE PRESENT
FROM THE FIRST BARRICADE
MEMOIRS OF THE OPERATIONS OF THIS INTERESTING
WAR
CHARACTERISTIC REPORTS

OF THE
SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE TROOPS

EDITED BY
JAMES CLAPHAM, ESQ.
OF THE ARMY

THE HISTORY OF THE CAMPAIGNS OF THE ARMY AND THE TROOPS

VOL. V.
VIEW OF THE CAMPAIGN OF THE ARMY AND THE TROOPS
MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE TOWN OF MADRID
RETIRED TO THE TOWN OF MADRID
THE HISTORY OF THE CAMPAIGNS OF THE ARMY AND THE TROOPS

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR T. BODDARD,

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Northumberland-Court, Strand, London.

PREFACE

TO

THE FIFTH VOLUME.

THIS Fifth Book of the Campaigns of the Peninsula of Europe, though possessing less of the matter in which minor history delights, will have, perhaps, higher claims than any division which has preceded, or may succeed it, to the attention of the military public.

It necessarily embraces a collection of documents on the most important matters that can concern an army, and in fact com-

prises, with a part of the preceding volume, a complete *practical* exhibition of the minutest elements of war, and that upon the most critical and important scene of operations, perhaps, that can ever be presented to an army.

Of the documents themselves, it were ridiculous to speak apologetically; and the only merit the writer may claim is selection, or a cautious rejection from their useful matter, 1st. of every article which did not tend to military information in proportion to its bulk; and, 2dly, of such as would not serve the public so much as they might interest the minds of its military servants.

To the merit of selection the writer may further lay claim in reducing to the compass

of this book the numerous documents in his possession, *including* the whole of the *important* papers presented to parliament upon different occasions. It is in furtherance of this object, that, unless where absolutely necessary, any original matter, either by way of fact or commentary, has been abstained from, in the introduction of the several letters and papers which form the interesting detail of the Spanish campaign of 1809.

How honourable this campaign was to the British forces, and their brave and excellent Commander, will be clearly seen from all those documents ;—forces, let it be remembered, which were yet strangers to the operations of a grand army ; a part of which had endured no common sufferings from the disasters of a former campaign ; who were

called to act in a country with the caution due to allies, while that country, labouring under previous miseries, was not prepared to afford the aid of alliance; and who had not merely the ordinary difficulties of armies to experience and to combat, but an enemy swollen with the pride of lawless conquest, under a General fondly styled by his master *Enfan gaté de la Victoire*,—the spoiled Child of Victory!

And, under all these difficulties, what was worse, they had to bear the scrutinizing eye of public contemplation, armed at all points with an aversion from the struggle to hold *one footing* on Europe.

—— Sharper than Polish pike or assagay,
They braved the shafts of censure and of shame,
And dearer far than life they pledg'd a soldier's fame.

The principle of this work continues, and will continue, the same,—that of yielding by faithful and independent narrative, from sources often naturally or expediently inaccessible, the real state of the operations of this eventful war, without any other influence than a love of justice and propriety, directed only by a superior love,—that of our country, under its present constitution.

of the world, and the history of the world, is a subject of great importance, and one which has attracted the attention of many of the most distinguished writers of the age. The history of the world is a subject which has been treated in many different ways, and the results of these different treatments have been very different. Some writers have treated the history of the world as a series of events, and have tried to explain these events by the action of natural causes. Others have treated the history of the world as a series of events, and have tried to explain these events by the action of supernatural causes. The history of the world is a subject which has been treated in many different ways, and the results of these different treatments have been very different.

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OF THE
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CHAP. I.

VIEWS OF THE ENEMY AND OF THE ALLIES.
—OPERATIONS WHICH IMMEDIATELY SUC-
CEEDED THE BATTLE OF TALAVERA.

*Report of Jourdan to Soult.—Continuous Re-
ports of the Spanish General Vanegas.—Critical
State of the Peninsular War.—The British Army,
however, particularly respected by the Enemy
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Principle in the Mind of Sir Arthur Wellesley.—
Misunderstanding between the Allied Armies.—
Continued Exertion of Military-Diplomatic Skill
on the Part of Mr. Frere.—Movement of the
Spanish Army.*

IF the Latin adage—*fas est ab hoste doceri*—can
never be neglected by a wise general, among whose
first principles will always be that caution not to

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July 30.

Fair to learn
from an ene-
my, but no ene-
my should be
despised.

despise an enemy, any thing that tends to shew the views of that enemy must be important. Still much more, then, must be those of allies whose connexion was peculiar, if their adherence were not doubtful; and it is on these accounts that it has been deemed expedient to commence the present volume by such authentic documents, in respect both to the one and the other, as were considered proper by the writer to present to the public.

The first and last of these documents are intercepted despatches of undoubted authenticity.

Bargas, 30th July, 1809.

Marshal,

Marshal Jour-
dan to marshal
Soult.

I have written to you several times since I left Madrid; but, as possibly my letters have been intercepted, I am about to detail to you the movements of the army under the king's command since the 23d up to the present day.

In the evening of the 22d, the king learnt that the English army, united with that of Cuesta, in the neighbourhood of Talavera, was preparing to act offensively against the duke of Belluno, who was encamped upon the Alberche, and whose headquarters were at Casaligas. The attack of the English army and of that of Cuesta upon the duke of Belluno was to be supported by 10 or 12,000 Portuguese, who had marched from the banks of the Tietar to Escalona, on the Alberche, with a

view to attack the duke of Belluno in the rear, at the same time that the English army and that of Cuesta were to move against him in front.

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Marshal Jourdan to marshal Soult.

The king, who had partly foreseen these movements, had ordered general Sebastiana to fall back upon Toledo. On the 23d the king left Madrid with the reserve, and passed the night at Naval Carnero. His majesty intended to continue his movements towards Casaligas, in order to join the duke of Belluno. He likewise intended to order the fourth corps to Casaligas on his arrival at Toledo, in the evening of the 23d. The duke of Belluno sent information to his majesty that he was sure of being attacked on the 23d; but that, not willing to engage an hostile army so superior in numbers, he was going to fall back to Toledo, and take up a position on the Guadarrama.

The king, therefore, could not continue his movements towards Casaligas. His majesty accordingly, on the 24th, repaired to Bargas by the road of Toledo. On that day the van of the fourth corps arrived at Toledo, and on the 25th the first corps. The fourth and the reserve joined each other in the neighbourhood of Toledo.

On the 26th, the king, having left 3000 men for the defence of Toledo, set out with the whole army to act offensively. At Torrijos he met the enemy's out-posts, which were repulsed towards the Spanish army encamped at Santa Olalla, where Cuesta had his head-quarters. The English army

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Soult.

had fallen back to Talavera, having a van guard at Casaligas. On the same day the king continued his march in the direction of Santa Olalla, where he established his head-quarters.

The Spanish army retreated to Talavera, but its rear was pursued and cut to pieces.

During the 27th the king continued his movements. The van of the English army was met with near Casaligas, and repulsed.

The Spanish and English armies took up their position; the right at Talavera, and the left on a height which is of extremely difficult access.

The king ordered the whole army to pass the Alberche. Whatever attempted to obstruct his march was repulsed, and the imperial army arrived at night within reach of the enemy's cannon.

Two hours more of daylight would have enabled the king to order the taking of the elevated plain on which the left wing of the enemy's army was posted, which would have been completely beaten, as that on the right was the chief support of its position.

The enemy, being aware of the importance of this formidable position, carried upon the height during the night a numerous artillery, and placed the whole English army in the rear of this position; while the Spanish army, 36,000 men in force, occupied the environs of Talavera.

Notwithstanding, the king resolved to attack the two hostile armies. On the 28th, at day-break,

the combat began by the attack of the heights, which attack was made by the troops of the first corps. Our troops went up to the attack with a valour not very common, but on arriving at the summit they were obliged to fall back, having been attacked by a superior force. They returned to their former positions, and the battle was suspended. The king himself gave orders to reconnoitre the heights, and it was decided that a new attack should be made on this important point, but that it should be made by the whole first corps, while the fourth was engaging the enemy's centre. The troops put themselves in motion at four in the afternoon, and a very hot action ensued. Our troops performed prodigies of valour, and forced the enemy to abandon the height, but could not maintain themselves there, owing to the facility which the enemy had to attack the heads of our columns with his superior force. The attack of the centre obliged the enemy likewise to give way. Our troops slept on the field of battle, after having caused the enemy an immense loss ; that on our part was also considerable. The whole infantry, excepting the reserve, was engaged ; the ground did not permit the cavalry to act.

The king having been informed that the army of Venegas had marched against Toledo and Aranjuez, and that it sent parties of cavalry as far as Madrid, thought proper to draw near to his capital, in order to prevent Madrid from being entered. He was

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Marshal Jourdan to marshal Soult.

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Marshal Jour-
dan to marshal
Soult.

also induced to take this resolution, in the hope that the result of the battle, and your movement towards Placentia, would cause the English army to separate from Cuesta's, and to return to Placentia.

Accordingly, on the 27th, the first corps took its rear position upon the Alberche; and on the same day his majesty, together with the fourth corps and the reserve, went to pass the night at Santa Olalla. To-day he is gone to Bargas. There his majesty is able once more to assist the first corps in preventing the enemy from undertaking any thing against Toledo without making Venegas repent his temerity, if he passed the Tagus at Aranjuez, in order to march against Madrid.

Now that I have communicated to you all that took place in the position occupied by the army, his majesty directs me to tell you, that if, by your movement towards Placentia, you do not compel the English army to separate from the Spanish, it would be difficult to resist all the forces which are in front of his majesty. Cuesta's army is 33,000 strong, and Venegas has 25,000. The English army likewise is composed at least of 25,000, whereto are to be added 12 or 15,000 Portuguese, under general Wilson. You see that all this amounts to 100,000 men.

I forgot to tell you that the corps of Wilson is advanced as far as Naval Carnero; and that, at the moment when the king marched against the English army, that corps was recalled.

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Marshal Jour-
dan to marshal
Soult.

His majesty hopes that you are on full march on your way to Placentia, and that, in case you have not met with the English army, you will seek it wherever it may be, in order to give it battle. You are aware that you have not a moment to lose, and that you must act with the greatest celerity.

The king wishes to hear from you frequently. You must endeavour to arrange your communication with Avila, so that intelligence from you may reach his majesty more speedily.

I have the honour to salute you with the most distinguished consideration.

(Signed) JOURDAN.

The despatches of general Venegas thus follow in a regular train.

Tembleque, 23th July, 1809.

Most excellent Sir,

Yesterday, at day-break, colonel Felipe de la Corte arrived at the royal residence of Aranjuez, with his small flying camp of 150 infantry and 80 horse, the former of the regiment of Rondor, and the latter of that of Espana. He covered with small parties of infantry the Puente Verde, the Puente de Barcas, and the Puente de la Reyna, and secured the fords with parties of cavalry without being perceived by the enemy. He then went with the remainder of his troops to the Puente de Barcas, where the enemy had their prin-

General Vene-
gas to M. de
Cornel.

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General Venegas to M. de
Cornel.

cipal force of 300 horse stationed on the right of the Tagus ; and, making a discharge upon them, they were put into confusion ; and though, upon being rallied by their officers, they approached the cover and fired upon our infantry, they were ultimately put to flight with the loss of some killed and wounded, and one prisoner of the 20th regiment of chasseurs a cheval.

Lieutenant-colonel don Josef Morete writes also from Aranjuez, assuring me to-night one of the bridges which were burnt will be repaired, and consequently, to-morrow morning, the second and third divisions will enter that Sitio, and perhaps in the evening the fourth, which is marching by Ocana, and shall follow it this morning. The fifth division is in march for Yapis, and I have named as its second in command the brigadier Conde de Alacha, captain of the royal Spanish guards.

Brigadier don Luis Lacy writes from Nombarca, at half past twelve to-day, that, as soon as his troops have dined, he will proceed at about three in the afternoon for Toledo, threatening immediately the gate of Alcantara, to force that of St. Martin's to-morrow at day-break, if circumstances permit.

(Signed) FRANCISCO VENEGAS.

Ocana, 29th July, 1809.

Most excellent Sir,

At five this morning the second division arrived at Aranjuez, and at eight the third.

General Venegas to M. de
Cornel.

Brigadier-general don Gasper had examined the bridge de la Reyna, which he expected would be repaired in the course of to-day ; for the defence of this bridge he had placed two pieces of cannon, supported by a battalion of infantry and two companies of miners.

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General Venegas to M. de Cornet.

The fords also have been left protected by parties of infantry and cavalry, for the distance of two leagues.

The fifth division arrived this morning at Yapis, and the fourth with my head-quarters at Ocana, where we shall remain until we hear again from general Cuesta, and of his operations, either through the means of lieutenant-colonel Cebrian, whom I have sent from Herencia, or by a cabinet courier despatched to me by general Cuesta, and who returned from Madrilijos ; or, lastly, by another, whom I this morning despatched to general Lacy, desiring him to state to me all the information he had been able to collect of the Anglo-Spanish army.

(Signed) FRANCISCO VENEGAS.

Ocana, 29th July, 1809.

Most excellent Sir,

Brigadier-general don Luis Lacy acquaints me of his having arrived at six, yesterday evening, with his division, on the heights which command Toledo on the side of the bridge of Alcantara ; that in the square of the castle there was a party of the enemy's infantry, who opened a fire upon our troops from two four-pounders, which his artillery an-

General Venegas to M. de Cornet.

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General Venegas to M. de
Cornel.

swered with the greatest precision. He caused his light troops to occupy the bridge, when a brisk fire of musketry commenced, the enemy attacking him from the neighbouring houses: that the fire continued until nightfall, when Lacy retired, in order to allow his troops time to repose and to refresh themselves, leaving the requisite advanced guard.

The bridge of St. Martin was also alarmed by a party of armed peasantry, under the command of don Ventura Ximerick, who kept up a fire upon the enemy until nine at night, having observed that at nightfall the enemy caused to retire two pieces of artillery which they had for the defence of the bridge. On our part we met with no loss, except that of a corporal of the grenadiers of Annea, who was killed by a cannon ball.

All the intelligence received from Lacy agrees in stating that there are from 3 to 4000 men in Toledo, including 200 horse and six pieces of artillery. He proposed to-day to threaten the other bridge of St. Martin, continuing at the same time the main attack upon that of Alcantara, and to endeavour, if he found a favourable opportunity, to get possession of the city. It is now ten at night, and I have not yet received any account of the result of his proposed plan, although they acquaint me, from Aranjuez, of their having heard during the whole morning a considerable firing of artillery in Toledo.

(Signed)

FRANCISCO VENEGAS.

Ocana, 30th July, 1809.

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CHAP. I.

Most excellent Sir,

In my despatch of yesterday I informed your excellency of the enemy's having, on the heights of La Reyna or Salinas, a post of 200 horse and 300 infantry, and that colonel Don Felipe de la Corti proposed to surround them with his flying camp, consisting of 150 soldiers of the regiment of Ronda, and the guerillas of the cavalry regiments de Espana, dragoons of Granada, Parnesio, Alcantara, lancemen of Utura, and smugglers, composing in all 250 horse. Having taken the necessary circuit in order to surround them, he succeeded in surprising them at nine at night, killing 90 and making six prisoners, dispersing the rest, who would either have been killed or made prisoners if the night had not facilitated their concealing themselves. In the morning twenty-two others, stragglers, were taken by the people of the surrounding villages, making in the whole twenty-eight, who are now in these head-quarters. In consequence of this action, the parties the enemy had in Cien Pózuelos and Valdemoro fled, carrying with them to Madrid terror and consternation.

1809.

July 30.

General Venegas to M. de Cornel.

(Signed)

FRANCISCO VENEGAS.

Ocana, 30th July, 1809.

Most excellent Sir,

By the messenger who arrived to-day I have received your excellency's despatch of

General Venegas to M. de Cornel.

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General Venegas to M. de Cornet.

the 27th instant, desiring me to suspend my operations, and to take up such a position as would secure my not being beaten, the English army not being able to advance from the want of provisions. Two hours afterwards, by an extraordinary courier despatched by general Cuesta, I received the agreeable intelligence of the enemy's having been repulsed and defeated in an attack they commenced at five in the evening of the 27th, and continued until eight on the following evening, in the vicinity of Talavera, which favourable intelligence has been celebrated by a general discharge from all the divisions of this army; and this morning a *Te Deum* has been sung in one of these parishes, at which I was present, attended by all the officers, the clergy, and municipal body, our pleasure being greater, as the enemy had published an extraordinary gazette, stating that José Napoleon had defeated the Anglo-Spanish army on the 26th instant.

General Cuesta informs me that the enemy were retreating upon Toledo, and that it would be advisable for me to avoid meeting them until the allied armies should have reposed and taken some sustenance, so as to enable them to pursue them.

Brigadier-general Lacy, in a despatch written from Nuestra Señora de la Secla, dated eleven this morning, tells me, that, an hour before, some of the enemy's infantry and cavalry were descending the road leading from Talavera to Toledo; that he proposed to take up an advantageous position, and de-

send himself to the last extremity. Before I had received this notice, I had already determined to reinforce him with the fifth division, which was at Yepas, and it must be already on its march to join Lacy. He will thus be able to make a better defence; and I have directed him, as a last resource, to retreat upon Mora. He yesterday still continued his attack upon the bridges of Toledo, his troops advancing till within half musket-shot, and our artillery dismounting one of the enemy's cannon. Notwithstanding various peasantry, who swam across the river, agree in stating that the garrison of that town amounts to between 3 or 4000 men, Lacy represents the entry into it as feasible in case we desire to force it at all events, and without regard to the loss of blood, the enemy firing from the windows of the neighbouring houses, which, in consideration of its being one of our towns, he felt a hesitation in destroying. Yesterday we had six or seven wounded, the loss of the enemy being much more serious, according to the information of the peasantry, they being so alarmed as not to dare to present themselves openly.

(Signed) FRANCISCO VENEGAS.

Ocana, 30th July, 1809.

Most excellent Sir,

About eight this evening lieutenant-colonel Don Lorenzo Cebrian, whom I had sent from Herencia to general Cuesta, requesting in-

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General Venegas to M. de Cornel.

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General Venegas to M. de
Cornel.

structions, returned. This officer was present during the battle of Talavera, and informs me that the combined army could not pursue the enemy for want of provisions. I am now writing to the general to propose that he should establish couriers as far as the point where Lacy is; and, as I have established them from thence, the communication, which, at this moment, I consider as most important, will remain unembarrassed.

Brigadier Garnez has seen the enemy in the neighbourhood of Anover, and his light parties have taken one prisoner, killing two or three of the enemy.

One of my people of confidence, with a party of six men, met to-day in Cien Pozuelos an officer of the enemy's staff, who, with a dragoon and a postilion, was coming from Madrid, from whence he set out at half past nine this morning with a pass from Belliard, and instructions to observe the movements of our armies and their own. Endeavoured to make him prisoner, but, he having resisted, killed him, bringing away the dragoon and the postilion.

(Signed)

FRANCISCO VENEGAS.

Talavera, 30th July, 1809.

Most excellent Sir,

General Cuesta to M. de
Cornel.

The enemy, to the number of about 10,000 men, infantry and cavalry, still remain in sight from the heights, on the other side of the Al-

berche. My van guard occupies the bridge, the army being in front of Talavera ; the line of the British army is on our left, a little in the rear. Both are occupied in attending the wounded, among whom are many French, and in burying the bodies of the enemies, the number of which is so great, that I have been obliged to order my troops out by battalions to burn them.

According to the most authentic accounts, the French themselves compute their loss at between 9 and 10,000 men.

We learn, by the same channel, that the enemy are retiring by Madrid, and not Toledo ; that Victor was seriously wounded, and a general of division killed ; that O'Farrell, Negretti, and Casa Palacia, were present during the action. That the baron de Armendaris is dangerously wounded, a prisoner in Torrijos, where they say they completely defeated the English, Portuguese, and the insurgents, merely because they obliged, for a moment, our van guard to retire. I have this moment received notice that marshal Soult, with 10 or 12,000 men, was marching for the Puerto de Bamos, intending to join Victor by the vale of Placentia ; but this measure has failed them, and, if he does not retreat, it is probable that he may fall into our hands.

(Signed)

GREGORIO DE LA CUESTA.

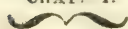
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General Cuesta to M. de
Cornel.

BOOK V.

CHAP. I.

Talavera, 31st July, 1809.

1809.

July 31.

General Cu-
esta to M. de
Cornel.

Most excellent Sir,

Our outposts having advanced this morning rather nearer to the enemy, they commenced a fire, which was, however, of but little consideration; they nevertheless pushed forward a pretty large corps of cavalry, and from all appearances, as well as from the accounts we have received, their whole force remains, with the exception of the imperial guard, which retired with Joseph Napoleon to Madrid, at about two or three leagues distance. Their stay, it should appear, can only be with the intention of waiting the arrival of Soult, that they may attack us in front and rear, as soon as they are certain of his approach. If we detach a force to oppose the one, we shall be too weak to resist the other, and it will therefore be necessary for us to attack Victor, notwithstanding his increased force, before the arrival of marshal Soult, whom we already consider in the neighbourhood of Placentia.

This question is still upon deliberation, but must be decided to-morrow. I have to-day received a letter from general Venegas, who tells me that his van guard is in Aranjuez, and the bridge of La Reyna established for his passage to Madrid, if he should meet with an opportunity to enter that city, or at any rate to draw off the attention of Victor.

This operation is of great importance, as we con-

sider their force, after deducting their loss, to amount to about 137,000 men, resolved to defend themselves to the utmost.

(Signed) GREGORIO DE LA CUESTA.

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July.

Talavera, 31st July, 1809.

Most excellent Sir,

By your excellency's letter of yesterday, dated from your head-quarters in Ocana, I am informed of the points occupied by the divisions under your command; that the bridge de la Reyna, in Aranjuez, has been repaired and rendered passable; and that the detachment of Don Jeliffe de la Corte had beaten one of 300 horse. With great pleasure and satisfaction I perceive also, by your letter, the manner in which your excellency caused the important victory obtained over the enemy by the English army, and that under my command, to be celebrated by your troops, thanking your excellency for the compliments you pay me on the occasion, and being fully persuaded of the anxious desire of your army to try their strength against the enemy.

According to the latest advices we have received Joseph was on his return to Madrid, accompanied by his guard, which was considerably diminished. Victor remains with about 26 or 28,000 men almost in sight, on the left bank of the Alberche, and marshal Soult with about 12,000 men in ad-

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July.General Cuesta
to general Venegas.

vance on our flank, having arrived at Bejar the day before yesterday, the 29th.

Under these circumstances, general Wellesley and myself have agreed that I should write to your excellency, directing you to march without a moment's delay, with all your force, upon Madrid, unless the number of the enemy there should oppose this measure; and we have no doubt of your excellency's receiving the greatest assistance from the most sensible and considerable part of the inhabitants, and that Joseph and his troops will have no choice left but to shut themselves up in the Retiro, or to fly precipitately. This operation must necessarily alarm Victor, so as to oblige him to detach a large part of his force; in which case general Wellesley and myself have agreed to put our armies in motion, and pursue the marshal, even to the gates of Madrid, from whence, in case of any unforeseen accident obliging you to retire, we conceive that you will be able to effect it by Arganda, and along the skirts of the mountains, sending me frequent advices of your movements. It is, however, most probable that Victor is not in a state to visit us, either on his march or in the capital; and that, after having diminished his force, we may fall upon that of Soult, if he ventures to present himself.

These combined operations will decide the fate of the campaign, and perhaps of the nation. I reckon in the strongest manner upon your excel-

lency's co-operation to effect so great an end ; and have no doubt of the result being favourable.

Your excellency will direct brigadier-general Lacy, in case of the enemy's evacuating Toledo, to march upon Madrid, and join you.

I have learnt, with the greatest pleasure, your appointment to be captain-general of Castile, in the event of the enemy's being driven out of the province.

(Signed) CUESTA.

Talavera, 1st Aug. 1809.

Most excellent Sir,

This morning, at day-break, we were surprised to find that the enemy had decamped, taking the road to Torrijos, as had been observed by our light parties which pursue them. We have taken some deserters and prisoners. The former declare, that, on our right and left, many French have deserted to the woods and villages in the neighbourhood, their discontent being general from the want of provisions, and from the continued and repeated attacks that are made upon them. They also declare that Sebastiana's division retired yesterday towards Toledo, in all probability on account of brigadier-general Lacy's threatened attack ; and it is very probable, that, in conjunction with Victor, he may march to the defence of Madrid, and to oppose general Venegas, to whom I have sent notice of this movement.

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General Cuesta
to general Venegas.

General Cuesta
to M. de Cor-
nel.

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August.General Cuesta
to M. de Cor-
nel

Marshal Soult's troops entered yesterday the town of Bejar; and by a respectable person, who had arrived there from Ciudad Rodrigo, it was said that 15,000 English and Portuguese, with their artillery, had been seen to quit that city, and it was supposed that they were marching in pursuit of Soult.

This intelligence has suspended our determination to follow close upon Victor.

(Signed) GREGORIO DE LA CUESTA.

Talavera, 31st July, 1809.

Translation of
an extract of a
letter from the
duke de Albu-
querque.

On the 26th instant, having requested the preceding day that my division might be the first sent to support the van guard, either in the case of its being attacked or of its attacking the enemy, brigadier-general Zaycas informed me that the enemy had attacked him with very superior forces, and that he hoped I would come to his support. I immediately made all my division mount, and in the mean time went to receive the orders of the general in chief, who made arrangements for the whole army to repass the Alberche, charging me to endeavour to check the enemy, in order to cover the retreat of the army. As soon as I was informed of his determination, I went forth to meet him. It would be very tedious to detail the plans I adopted in order to repulse them, and to check the precipitate flight of the van guard, already within musket-shot of head-quarters, although it consisted of 2000

horse, 4000 infantry, and 8 pieces of artillery. It will be sufficient to state the result, which was the checking the enemy, giving time for the van guard to form, and the unmolested retreat of the whole army to this town, from Santa Olalla, where we were; adding only, that if I had not received a second order from the general to retire, I was preparing to attack the enemy almost with the certainty of success; but, as there was no time to make representations, I had no choice but to obey.

This retreat filled all the troops with fear and discontent, and I believe are to be attributed to it the two days' attack we have experienced, suffering hunger, heat, and the continued fire of the enemy. By the divine mercy, however, we have succeeded in repulsing the enemy, who, instead of attacking the right on the evening and night of the 27th, attacked the left, occupied by a part of the English army, which with charged bayonets repulsed the enemy at night, who at first had succeeded in getting possession of the nearest height. The general-in-chief, upon seeing them, ordered me to go to a hermitage in the neighbourhood of the town, where it not only was impossible for the cavalry to act, but there was not even room for them, the neighbouring country being very thickly wooded. Seeing the nature of the ground, and at the same time that the enemy was charging the English with the whole of their force, who had but little cavalry, I hastened to support them, and arrived so very

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querque.

opportunely, that, had I not been there, they would have had great difficulty in forming their line in the position agreed upon, which was on the left of the whole army. My division never gave me greater proofs of their confidence and spirit than on this occasion, supporting a brisk fire of the enemy, which was only answered by two four-pounders and two howitzers.

The general, perceiving the advantage of my movement, suffered me to choose my own ground, and accordingly I chose the most advantageous spot, and the most threatened by the enemy, being precisely that where were the English cavalry. The enemy, on the following day, renewed their attack, instantly directing their chief force against the English, with whom I had the satisfaction to co-operate, from the first shot that was fired to the last; having supported three different attacks with an obstinacy hitherto unknown among these troops. General Wellesley was greatly satisfied with the conduct of my division, and assented to my resolution to demand of the general-in-chief another of infantry, which I ordered to occupy a height which flanked our position, and of which the enemy were about to take possession when the said division arrived, which was the 5th, commanded by don Luis Bassecourt. I know he has written to Mr. Frere, expressing himself highly satisfied with my conduct; and I must acquaint you, for your guidance, that the whole of the English staff have

expressed the strongest wishes that the command of the army should be given to me, and its dissatisfaction with general Cuesta. Almost all the generals, as well as the chiefs, and most of the officers and soldiers, express the same desire.

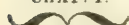
Alavay, whose frankness you know, has written, in the strongest terms, to Valdes, pointing out the absolute necessity of removing Cuesta, and that the command should be given either to Blake, Venegas, or myself, though he does not openly mention me, lest they should think he speaks from partiality and interest, being with me.

The army is certainly in the greatest danger; there are neither provisions, staff, nor settled plan. During our marches we stop to repose like flocks of sheep, without taking any position, so that, if the enemy knew the condition we were in, they would defeat us whenever they attacked us. If, in the evening of the 28th, I had not gone out directly with my division, and succeeded in checking the enemy, the whole army would have dispersed, and all the artillery and baggage, which were in the streets of St. Olalla, would have been lost; and as a proof of what would have happened, had not the enemy, who was within musket-shot, been checked, for many had already thrown away their arms, &c. the commissaries abandoning more than 1500 rations of bread, the carts occupying and blocking up the streets of the town; and to this, I repeat, we are daily exposed, as we march as if it were on a pilgrimage; without any

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regard to distance, order, or method, and with the whole park of artillery, which ought always to remain at the distance of two, three, or more leagues. Finally; let them undeceive themselves; if the general-in-chief does not establish a regular staff, which not only shall have the name, but shall know and fulfil its duty; if he does not prepare in this month what he will want in the course of the next, *viz.* provisions, ammunition, shoes, &c. &c. of which we stand greatly in need; if he does not select as generals of divisions, as well for the infantry as cavalry, persons capable of executing this important duty, as well by their talents as by the knowledge necessary to oppose the enemy we have to combat, without respect to rank, to seniority, to private friendships, and relationship; and moreover, if they do not immediately reward and punish those who merit it;—we can never hope to shake off the yoke which oppresses us. We may only expect to ruin our country; all our efforts will be fruitless; and, what will be the height of our misfortune, the English army will perhaps quit us, and refuse to co-operate with us: God forbid that this should ever be the case! for, to speak with that truth which I have ever preferred to all policy, the present fortunate event we owe alone to the English, and nothing but their general's prudence can make him tolerate ours, though it is to be feared he may be tired out.

Some divisions have dispersed entirely, while

some, as it is known to the English, have supported their post with the greatest spirit, which proves that all is owing to the chief who leads them.

I have been, perhaps, too circumstantial; but I have enlarged, to shew in one view what is the state of this army, and what I conceive should be that of any army in the world.

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July.

Translation of
an extract of a
letter from the
duke de Alba-
querque.

Jargas, 31st July, 1809.

It is of the greatest importance to me to obtain some information respecting the march of marshal Soult, by the return of the present courier.

Joseph Buona-
parte to colo-
nel Lugo, go-
vernor of Avila.

The most important results will depend upon my knowledge of the day on which he will arrive at Placentia, and more particularly at Almaraz. I hope he will not have to wait the arrival of marshal Ney to begin his march: from Placentia he must continue to advance until he meets with the English army, which will be followed and harassed by the 1st corps.

Try to forward a copy of this letter to marshal Soult.

Send me daily bulletins of his march.

All is well, but would be better if marshal Soult should be, on the 31st, at Almes, as I have reason to believe he will.

Your affectionate

(Signed)

JOSEPH.

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Nothing could be more critical than the state of the peninsular war at the battle of Talavera, an action which, doubtful as was its character and results, certainly formed the distinct difference between the present and the preceding campaign. Without this trial with the enemy, foot to foot, the British army could have no longer continued the ally of Spain; with such a trial previously made, it would not now have occurred under such disadvantages.

Hitherto the brave British troops had at least avoided the enemy, whom they had had no opportunity of meeting for a long time on the continent of Europe, unless in the hapless affair of Corunna; the enemy therefore did not know them, unless in those insular affairs, which, from their locality and brevity, were much confined. That the knowledge which they now derived was eminently useful will appear, among others, in the following circumstances:—

1st. That the enemy were in every instance highly respectful towards the officers and soldiers of the British army with whom they fell in contact, and also such of the allies as *did* accompany them.

And, 2d. That the British army and also the allies did acquire a closer idea of the real character of the enemy, not merely in point of force, but of amenity, and all the other characteristics of a fighting army, than had been entertained before.

The following correspondence of the British commander-in-chief and the Spanish generals shews the situation of affairs in a very peculiar manner :—

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Talavera, 31st July, 1809.

Sir,

I have the honour to enclose the copy of a letter which I have received from don Martin de Garay, upon which I request you to convey to him the following observations :—I shall be very much obliged to him if he will understand that I have no authority, nay, that I have been directed not, to correspond with any of the Spanish ministers ; and I request that he will in future convey to me, through you, the commands which he may have for me.

Sir Arthur
Wellesley to
Mr. Frere.

I am convinced that I shall then avoid the injurious and uncandid misrepresentation which don Martin de Garay has more than once sent me, apparently with a view of placing on the records of his government statements of my actions and conduct which are entirely inconsistent with the truth ; to which statements I have no regular means of replying.

As soon as my line of march into Spain was determined upon, which you and don Martin de Garay are aware was not till a very late period, I sent to procure means of transport and other supplies, in the places in which I considered it most

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July.Sir Arthur
Wellesley to
Mr. Frere.

likely I should get them, viz. Placentia, Ciudad Rodrigo, Gata, Bejar, &c. &c., and as soon as I found I had failed, I wrote to general O'Donoghue on the 16th instant a letter, of which you have, and of which I know the government have a copy, in which I told him, that, as I had not received the assistance I required, I could undertake for no more than the first operations, which I had settled with general Cuesta, in my interview with him on the 11th.

It is therefore an unfounded statement that the first account the government received of my intentions not to undertake any new operations was when they heard that I had left general Cuesta alone to pursue the enemy. The fact is not true; for, although I disapproved of general Cuesta's advance of the 24th and 25th, which I knew would end as it did, I did support it with two divisions of infantry and a brigade of cavalry, which covered his retreat to Alberche on the 26th, and his passage of that river on the 27th; and, supposing the fact to be true, and general Cuesta was exposed to be attacked by the enemy when alone, it was his fault, and not mine, and I had given him fair notice, not only by my letters of the 16th, but frequently afterwards, that I could do no more.

It is not a difficult matter for a gentleman in the situation of don Martin de Garay to sit down in his cabinet, and write his ideas of the glory which would result from driving the French through the Pyrenees; and I believe there is no man in Spain

who has risked so much, or who has sacrificed so much to effect that object, as I have.

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Sir Arthur
Wellesley to
Mr. Frere.

But I wish that don Martin de Garay, or the gentlemen of the junta, before they blame me for not doing more, or impute to me beforehand the probable consequences of the blunders or the indiscretion of others, would either come or send here somebody to satisfy the wants of a half-starved army, which, although it has been engaged for two days, and has defeated twice its numbers in their service, have not bread to eat.

It is positively fact, that, during the last seven days, the British army have not received one-third of their provisions; that at this moment there are nearly 4000 wounded soldiers dying in the hospital in this town, for want of the common assistance and necessaries which any other country in the world would have given even to its enemies; and that I can get no assistance of any description in the country. I cannot prevail upon them even to bury the dead carcasses in the neighbourhood, the stench of which will destroy themselves as well as us.

I cannot avoid to feel these circumstances; and the junta must see that, unless they and the country make a great exertion to support and supply the armies, to which the invariable attention and the exertion of every man and the labour of every beast in the country ought to be directed, the bravery of the soldiers, and their losses and their success, will only make matters worse, and increase our embarrass-

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July.Sir Arthur
Wellesley to
Mr. Frere.

ments and distress. I positively will not move, nay, more, I will disperse my army, till I am supplied with provisions and means of transport, as I ought to be.

I have the honour to be, sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

Talavera, 31st July, 1809.

Sir,

Lieutenant-general
sir Arthur
Wellesley to
major-general
O'Donoghue.

Adverting to the intelligence which has been received of the movement of a French corps towards the Puerto de Banos, I cannot avoid to request that you will press his excellency general Cuesta to detach towards that quarter, on this night, a division of his infantry, with its guns; and a commanding officer, upon whose exertions and abilities he can rely.

I certainly never could have advanced so far if I had not reason to believe that point was secure; and I still think the movements of general Beresford, with the Portuguese army, on the frontier, or that of the duke del Parque from Ciudad Rodrigo, combined with the natural difficulties of the country and the defence by the marquis del Reyna, may delay the enemy's advance till the arrival of this division.

At all events this division will not be missed here; and it will be in a situation to observe the enemy, if he should have crossed the mountains

before the arrival of the division; but if the division should arrive in time, it would perform a most important service to the common cause, as it will preclude the necessity of my adopting more effectual measures to re-establish and secure my communication with Portugal, which measures must tend to delay the execution of all our plans against the great body of the enemy.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

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July.
Lieutenant-general
sir Arthur
Wellesley to
major-general
O'Donoghue.

I have to observe, his excellency is equally interested with me in preventing this irruption into Placentia; as the enemy's first step will certainly be to interrupt his excellency's communication with Seville by the bridge of Almaraz.

Talavera de la Reyna, 1st Aug. 1809.

My lord,

Since I had the honour of addressing you on the 29th July, the enemy have continued to keep a rear guard of about 10,000 men on the heights on the left of the Alberche, and I imagine that the whole army is still in the neighbourhood. It is difficult, however, to ascertain this fact, owing to the great deficiency of intelligence in the Spanish army.

Lieutenant-general
sir Arthur
Wellesley to
lord viscount
Castlereagh.

On the 30th we received intelligence that provisions had been ordered for a French corps of 10,000 or 12,000 men, on the road from Alba de

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Lieutenant-general sir Arthur Wellesley to lord viscount Castle-reagh.

Tormes towards Bejar, in the Puerto de Banos, which affords the best road through the range of mountains which separates Placentia and Estremadura from Castille.

I had hoped that this pass had been effectually secured by the Spanish troops, otherwise I certainly should not have moved from Placentia; and I had taken the further precaution (to secure that point as well as the frontiers of Portugal) of directing marshal Beresford to assemble the Portuguese army in the neighbourhood of Ciudad Rodrigo, within the Spanish frontiers.

I am apprehensive, however, that the marshal, although he was at Ciudad Rodrigo about the —, had not been able to collect his troops in time; and, as I cannot prevail upon general Cuesta to detach a sufficient force to secure that important point, I am apprehensive that this French corps will pass through the mountains into Estremadura in our rear.

These circumstances, combined with the extreme fatigue of the troops, the want of provisions, and the number of wounded to be taken care of, have prevented me from moving from my position.

Brigadier-general Crawford arrived with his brigade on the 29th in the morning, having marched twelve Spanish leagues in little more than twenty-four hours. General Venegas's corps arrived upon the Tagus on the 28th and 29th, and he attacked Toledo, with a detachment under brigadier-ge-

neral Lacy, and moved himself to the bridge of Aranjuez.

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August.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

Talavera la Reyna, 1st Aug. 1809.

Most excellent Sir,

This morning I apprized your excellency, that the whole of the enemy's force, which was in front of us, had disappeared, and that our light troops, having pursued them, had come up with them at St. Olalla, and made 32 prisoners.

Gen. Cuesta to
M. Cornel.

At the pressing desire of Sir Arthur Wellesley, though, in my opinion, with little advantage, I detach to-morrow, at day-break, the 5th division, under the orders of major-general Bassecourt, with 300 cavalry, in the direction of Placentia, and Puerto de Banos.

Talavera, 1st Aug. 1809.

Most excellent Sir,

I last night acquainted your excellency with the situation of the allied armies, and with the enemy's preserving his position in our front, with the whole of the troops which remained after the action of the 27th and 28th. This morning we found that they had decamped and entirely disappeared, taking the road of Torrijos and Toledo, as I have been informed; and I hasten to announce this movement to your excellency, and

Gen. Cuesta to
gen. Venegas.

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Gen. Cuesta to
gen. Venegas.

to brigadier Lacy, for your guidance, and that you may take the necessary precautions. We have learnt that marshal Soult entered Bejar with 12 or 14,000 men the day before yesterday, and that he was proceeding towards Banos, which post he may already have forced, with the intention of joining Victor, or of attacking us in flank ; we trust, however, that this operation can no longer succeed, though it makes us more circumspect in pursuing the enemy.

I am extremely desirous of knowing what effects your excellency's approach to Madrid will have; and I think, unless they have been reinforced on the other hand, it would be very possible to gain possession of that capital, which measure would be of the greatest importance, in order to cut off their means and resources. I trust your excellency will do every thing that is possible to effect this object.

A number of deserters are arriving from the enemy, and we find many prisoners wounded and abandoned in the woods.

GREG. DE LA CUESTA.

Talavera, 1st Aug. 1809.

My Lord,

Sir A. Wellesley to Lord viscount Castlereagh.

When I addressed you this morning, I had not received the reports from the outposts. It appears that the enemy withdrew the rear-guard, which was posted on the heights, on

the left of the Albu, the last night, at 11 o'clock, and the whole army marched towards Santa Olalla, I conclude with an intention of taking up a position in the neighbourhood of the Guadarama, with a view to be able to throw their whole force upon Venegas, or upon this army, if either should move towards Madrid.

I have the honour to be, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

The following note from that active *partisan*, sir Robert Wilson, is the precursor of the fate of his little force.

Monbello, 2d Aug. 1809.

My dear General,

The enclosed letter will probably account for the forward movements of the enemy, who menace me so seriously, that I shall immediately retire my artillery to St. Roman, occupying the Panadu with 300 men of the Merida battalion; the remainder 600 will take post on a strong height beyond this town, from whence they have a good retreat to St. Valuela.

The main body of infantry I shall move to Gar-section, ready to occupy St. Valuela, or obey such orders as you may give.

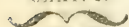
(Signed) ROBERT WILSON.

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CHAP. I.

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August.

Sir A. Wellesley to lord viscount Castlereagh.

Sir Rob. Wilson to sir. A. Wellesley.



The Spanish general thus writes:—

Ciudad Rodrigo, 1st Aug. 1809.

Most excellent Sir,

Duke del
Parque to gen.
Berisford.

By your excellency's letter of yesterday I received the intelligence respecting the enemy, which you were pleased to transmit to me, and which was sent you from Braganza, and was glad to find it agreed with that I sent you, as it proves them both to have been correct. Yesterday the only advice I received was, that the enemy, continuing their system of robbery, had been in various villages of the Sierra de Francia, and had entered the town of Bejar, where, unfortunately, they had found a quantity of cloth and money to satiate their avarice. If I had a sufficient force, I would undertake a good operation against the Sierra de Francia, where they cannot in any way make use of their cavalry, thus preventing their progress, and recovering part of their booty they have made, which, as I am informed, amounts to upwards of 15,000,000 reals; but, as I cannot do all that I would wish, I have ordered the battalion of marksmen of Ciudad Rodrigo to march this very morning, and, by getting possession of the highest parts of the mountain, endeavour to check the enemy's progress, and to give these troops the advantage of getting the booty carried off by the enemy, as that found upon the dead and the prisoners never fails to be very considera-

ble; witness that obtained by the peasantry of the mountain on those killed in an affray which took place yesterday, and on others who were made prisoners, and have been brought to me in the citadel. By another letter from your excellency of the same date, I learnt that part of your troops had arrived at St. Felices, and that the rest were successively to take up the position upon the Agueda;

This situation appears to me excellent to cover the frontiers of Portugal; but if your excellency proposes to threaten the enemy, and to check his progress, so that he may not come up with the rear of the British army, it will be absolutely necessary for you to abandon this position.

And, in order that your excellency may meet with no hinderance or delay in the service of the army under your command, as you tell me you have already experienced, I have appointed the commissary d'Vicente Izquierdo to remain with your excellency, to expedite any orders you may issue, which arrangement, I conceive, will put a stop to any inconvenience which may arise.

(Signed)

EL DUKE DEL PARQUE CASTRILLO.

Sir Robert Wilson's fate approached nearer.

Monbello, 2d Aug. 1809.

Sir,

You will perceive by the enclosed letter that the enemy have entered Bejar, and I

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August.

Duke del
Parque to
gen. Beresford.

Sir R. Wilson
to col. Mur-
ray.

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August.Sir R. Wilson
to col. Mur-
ray.

also learn that 2,500 cavalry have entered Hormigos, a league in my front; and that a column of infantry, the strength of which I know not, is moving in the same direction from Maqueda. From these circumstances it is not impossible that I may be obliged to retire to the heights on my rear, or move to my right, should I not receive support from Talavera.

Troops that were moving on Madrid, I understand, have again advanced, and I am led to think the enemy either intends to strike a blow on me, or persist in their plan of establishing a free communication with the reinforcements they expect under Soult.

(Signed) ROBERT WILSON.

The Spanish generals continued.

Ocana, 2d Aug. 1809.

Most excellent Sir,

Gen. Venegas
to gen. Cuesta.

At seven this morning I received your excellency's despatch, dated the 30th, 11 P. M. from your head-quarters at Talavera la Reyna; and at half-past one this afternoon the second, dated yesterday, 11 A. M. from the same place.

As soon as I received the first, I sent orders to the 1st and 5th divisions, commanded by don L. Lacy and don J. Zirain, to march without loss of time to Aranjuez, leaving 600 infantry and 200 cavalry at Toledo, if the enemy should have

evacuated it, and, if not, in its immediate neighbourhood, intending myself to join the 4th division at that place to-morrow, and to march with the whole army upon Madrid, according to your excellency's instructions. Your excellency's second despatch informs me of the enemy having entirely disappeared, and gone off in the directions of Torrijos and Toledo, which makes me consider my march upon Madrid, which you again enjoin me, as more difficult, and attended with greater risk.

The enemy, by combining their marches, must already be in Toledo, if they took the direction of that city; in which case, supposing that I march to-morrow for Aranjuez, where the 1st and 5th divisions are to arrive, they would fall on my rear guard, marching by my left, or on the parallel line with me; and, if they marched through Torrijos direct upon Madrid, they would have the start of me, and get between my army and the capital.

In either case your excellency will observe the difficulty and impossibility of the combined army arriving in time to assist me in an unequal combat with an enemy so superior in numbers as that of Victor, joined by such corps as may be able to leave Madrid to combine operations against me.

However, I shall have my whole army united to-morrow night at Aranjuez; and if, from the information I receive, circumstances should appear to promise a favourable issue from a march upon Madrid, I will undertake it; but at present I am

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Gen. Venegas
to gen. Cuesta.

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Gen. Venegas
to gen. Cuesta.

rather inclined to wait for fresh orders from your excellency; and I trust you will allow me to submit to your consideration my opinion of the indispensable necessity of our movements being combined, and of the army under your command putting itself in motion without a moment's delay; as, if we were to beat Victor, it would be of very little consequence, that, successively, Soult should come up.

Your excellency, in your deep penetration, will pay what attention you may think it merits to the reflection I have the honour to make to you, and will transmit me your orders in consequence.

(Signed) VENEGAS.

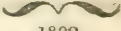
Talavera, 2d Aug. 1809.

Most excellent Sir,

Gen. Cuesta to
M. Cornel.

Nothing has occurred with the enemy in front; but it appears they are approaching on our flank. The brigadier-general marquis de Rayno, who commands the troops left to protect the Puerto de Banos, informs me, that, not being able to oppose the force commanded by marshal Soult, he had fallen back upon Victor, and that the enemy entered Placentia at two, yesterday afternoon. In consequence of this intelligence, I had a conference with general Wellesley on the question of marching to meet Soult before he approaches nearer to Talavera, and could combine an attack with marshal Victor; it was settled that the Eng-

lish troops should march to-morrow at day-break against Soult, while the Spanish army should remain at Talavera to oppose Victor, from whom we shall endeavour to conceal the march, that the division of our force may not be known to him, for which purpose it may be proper for brigadier-general Wilson to remain in advance upon our left in escalon, with his Portuguese and Spanish advanced guard.

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Gen. Cuesta to
M. Cornet.

We suppose that, on the third day, the French, Portuguese, and English, may meet, and that the affair will promptly be decided. If, in the mean time, Victor and Sebastiana should propose to attack me with superior force, I shall commence my retreat to join the English.

Brigadier-general Lacy was yesterday still before Toledo, and general Venegas in Ocana and Aranjuez.

(Signed)

CUESTA.

This period is particularly interesting.—The following letter amply describes the political relations between the armies :—

Seville, 3d Aug. 1809.

Dear Sir,

I received, at a late hour last night, your private letter of the 31st, and this morning another, in an official form, in date of the following day.

Mr. Frere to
sir A. Welles-
ley.

With respect to the subject of M. de Garay's

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Mr. Frere to
sir A. Welles-
ley.

letter, I apprehended that he imagined that he should come better off directing himself immediately to you than by communicating upon the same points through me, after the discussion to which I alluded in my letter of the day before yesterday, and which was almost the only warm and violent one, certainly much the most so, which I have ever had with the gentlemen of the junta. With respect to the subjects of co-operation, it was made manifest to them that general Cuesta had not only concealed from them the circumstance of the impossibility of his receiving aid from the British (which was new to them at the time I informed them of it, though they had before them a letter of the same date as yours from that general); but that the instructions given to general Venegas (which, in case the enemy, instead of attacking the combined army at Talavera, had directed their efforts against him, would have compromised, and probably led to the destruction of his army) were such as would lead him to suppose that he might reckon upon a combined advance of the whole British army at Talavera.

It is useless and endless to attempt to drive the Spaniards out of a bad argument. In my correspondence with M. de Cevallos, a foolish fallacy, half-a-dozen times refuted in the course of half-a-year, was reproduced by him at the end of the discussion with such gravity, in a note to M. de Anduaga, almost immediately before he (M. de An-

duaga) left London, that he supposed it to allude to some former agreement. It is not worth while to quarrel with them, nor to waste time in discussion, in order to prevent them, if they are so disposed, from keeping a rubbish of bad reasoning in their own archives, especially when the proofs to the contrary are in our own hands. I have, however, obtained the minute of M. de Garay's letter, which I enclose. A translation of your letter was read to him, and to a commission which I desired to be named for the purpose; and I accompanied it with such observations as I thought necessary to impress the force of the reasonings, which, upon those subjects, were not new to him from me. Upon general Cuesta's behaviour, particularly those parts of it which I have mentioned above, there is but one opinion; and they would be glad to have from you some representation or insinuation, which would justify them in applying the only effectual remedy to the mischief which now exists, and to those of greater moment which they apprehend, by removing him from the command.

The rank of captain-general, which has been offered you, was intended with a view to enable them to do this at some future period; but I am persuaded that the present moment is the best.

M. de Garay's letter on that subject was not, I conceive, improperly directed to you as a personal compliment, consequent upon the obligations under which they were personally placed. M. de Garay

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Mr. Frere to
sir A. Welles-
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Mr. Frere to
sir A. Welles-
ley.

did not, however, communicate it to me before-hand, intending it, I suppose, as an agreeable surprise to me, for he wrote the same evening the resolution was taken in the Junta, at which time I am not in the habit of attending, and communicated it to me next morning. He was, however, aware of my wishes, as, when he had talked to me the same day of some present of a rich sword, which had belonged to the prince of peace, I said, "You had better send a marshal's staff," to which this is equivalent in the Spanish service, where that rank or rather that appellation is unknown, for the rank is considered the same, and is as rarely conferred, and never, I believe before, except in one instance, upon a foreigner.

The measure which you allude to, of sending a commission, or a member of the junta, has been already taken: M. Calvo has been chosen for this purpose; and, amongst other commissions, is to take the order of Charles III. to general Cuesta, according to the usual system of dissimulation, lest he should take umbrage at the distinction conferred upon you. The choice of M. Calvo, I confess, appears to me a singular one; he is, at this moment, under a cloud, for something very like a conspiracy against the junta, and the fact of his intimacy and connexion with the conspirators is notorious.

Though he has been considered an enemy of general Cuesta's, he has with him two strong

points of sympathy; the one which I have before mentioned, and that of being a declared enemy of Castano's, and may, probably, unless he finds him already too much discredited in the army, endeavour to make his party good with him. In other respects he is a man of method, energy, and activity; and, having been brought up in commercial business, might, but for these circumstances, have been a very proper and natural choice.

In other respects the government have taken all the measures in their power, and are ready to take any that you may indicate, to facilitate the provisioning of the army under your command. You are already apprized of the armed requisition which had been made for conveying to your army all the beasts of carriage which were to be found in the country, and which were to proceed, in the first instance, loaded with provisions. Orders have likewise been sent to arrest all the alcaldes who had neglected to comply with the requisitions already sent them, and to take them in custody to Badajoz.

Two members of that junta have been sent to forward the collecting of provisions in Estremadura, and are already set off.

Additional orders have likewise been sent to the alcaldes, according to the mode usual in circumstances of great emergency, obliging each to take a copy of the order which he has received, and to sign a receipt for it, after which it is forwarded to

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Mr. Frere to
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sir A. Welles-
ley.

the next, and the messenger charged with this despatch is to be followed by an officer, who is either to report the execution of the order, or, in case of its not having been complied with, to send away the delinquents in custody. An order of the 3d of February last has been renewed, and sent round into Estremadura, directing all those who deserted from the army on the eve of the action, officers and others, among whom it is understood that there are many attached to the provisionment of the army, shall be taken and shot at the first village where they are apprehended, without any further formality than the identifying of their persons. All these are violent measures, and may, perhaps, serve for the moment, though not of a nature to procure a constant and regular supply. It may seem to you, perhaps, that a British minister ought, before this time, to have established a regular system for securing the subsistence of their armies ; but the evil is of a very deep origin, derived from an old despotic government, and from a system of eighteen years of the basest corruption, intrigue, and public pillage. The effects of all this still continue, and, in part, the system. It is such as even a sovereign in ordinary times would find it difficult to remedy, and, in times like these, required an authority very different from what I have at any time found myself possessed of. I had hardly become acquainted with the new state of things, and the new faces, and we had hardly re-

covered from the confusion of our flight hither, before I ceased to be a minister of an auxiliary power.

At the time that operations in favour of this country by a British force were announced, the intelligence was accompanied by the intimation of my recall, and, since that time, I have literally been a minister only from day to day, looking out for the arrival of my successor by the first fair wind; a situation very unfavourable to any thing like a controlling influence. I have not, however, omitted to employ all the means in my power; and, though the momentary outcry against me in England placed me under obligations to the junta for representations which their sense of the services and advice for which they conceived themselves indebted to me dictated to them in my favour, I have not hesitated to use the strongest language and to take the highest tone towards those very persons whom I had considered the warmest and most forward in that measure. The marquis of Wellesley's situation will, in all respects, be very different, and I trust that, with his talents and activity, he will be able to remedy the evil, as far as it is capable of a remedy. One very important point is, that of prompt recompense to such persons as may distinguish themselves in the service of supplying the army; for they are well aware that the testimonial of such services, received from a British general, and presented some time hence by a British minister in support of any solicitation in favour of the person who had ob-

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Mr. Frere to
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Mr. Frere to
sir A. Welles-
ley.

tained it, would not be of any great value. I have spoken upon this subject to M. de Garay, and he has promised that any representation or intercession in favour of any individual which you may have occasion to make shall be instantly complied with, as he said, by the return of post. I must not omit to say that he took your letter in better part than I should have thought it possible; but, among his other good qualities, he has that of an admirable temper, and I can venture to say that you may consider yourself perfectly upon the same footing with him as if nothing unpleasant had ever passed between you. With respect to your other letters, orders have been sent to-night; or, if they have not, I will take care that they shall be sent to-morrow morning to the duke de Parque, and to general Romana, whose van guard is at present situated at Villa Franca, conformable to the plan which you indicate, and a similar communication will be made to marshal Beresford. Cavalry, I fear, cannot be furnished from hence, as all the depots are exhausted, and the utmost that can be done is to send horses to equip some of the dismounted of the regiment of La Reyna. In case, however, you should wish that a detachment from the cavalry under general Cuesta's order should be employed for any service in that direction, I will take care that orders shall be sent him to conform to your wishes in that particular.

(Signed)

J. H. FRERE.

The commander-in-chief continues his views of the campaign.

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Oropesa, Aug. 3, 1809.

Dear Sir,

I arrived here a little after 12, but have received no intelligence of the enemy. There is no dust forwards, and I understand that we have a commissary at Naval Moral, who would probably have moved if he had heard of the enemy on this side of Tietar.

Lieut.-gen. sir
A. Wellesley to
major-gen.
O'Donoghue.

I have written to general Bassecourt to recommend to him to halt to-morrow at Centinello; and to patrol the roads in the Vera de Placentia, as well as in his front. The movements of the enemy, which sir Robert Wilson announced in his letter of last night, which I gave you this morning, induce me to think that he will not again endeavour to force his way through the valley of Talavera, but that he intends to be in readiness to aid Soult by Escalona, between the Alérche and the Tietar. If I should be correct in this notion, general Cuesta may be induced to give up his position at Talavera, and then my hospital there will be placed in a state of risk. This gives me great uneasiness.

At all events, in the present state of our operations, it appears to me that the hospital is too far advanced at Talavera, and I am very desirous of moving it further back. I wish that you would

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Lieut.-gen. sir
A. Wellesley to
major-gen.
O'Donoghue.

mention this subject to general Cuesta, and request him from me to make a requisition, in the country south of the Tagus, for carts to remove the hospital. It is impossible to hope to be able to move it at once; indeed to attempt it might destroy the men whom we wished to save; but, by first fixing upon an intermediate station at no great distance from Talavera, we might soon remove the whole from thence, and afterwards by degrees to the place to be ultimately fixed upon for the hospital. I cannot avoid to take this opportunity of recommending that general Venegas should be ordered to keep the enemy in a state of alarm for the safety of Madrid, the only one by which he can oblige the enemy to keep his forces divided. This is really necessary till we shall have our rear clear and secure again.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

Oropesa, 3d Aug. 1809.

My dear Sir,

Lieut.-gen. sir
A. Wellesley to
major-gen.
O'Donoghue.

I have just received your letter of this day, and its enclosures. I acknowledge that I do not conceive the enemy are likely to attack you, or to harass me, as they say they will, for some time, and I wish that general Cuesta had remained a little longer. Sir Robert must give you notice if they break through at Escalona, and you are in time if you march when you find the enemy making that movement, or breaking up for a forward move-

ment from Sta. Olalla. You see that Joseph, with Sebastiana's corps, is, or rather was, at Varges.

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Lieut.-gen. sir
A. Wellesley to
major-general
O'Donoghue.

At all events, I conceive that it will be desirable that you should delay your march till morning, and send off our wounded, commissariat, baggage, &c. before you, and that you should halt in the wood where Venta is till the wounded will have arrived at Arzobispo, and your baggage be here.

Depend upon it you are mistaken in Soult's strength, and that Victor, without Sebastiana and Joseph, who cannot move while Venegas is where he is, can do us no harm.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

I conclude that you will take care to establish a strong post at Arzobispo, and destroy the bridge at Talavera.

The situation of the menacing armies is thus approaching its crisis.

Talavera, 3d Aug. 1809.

My dear Sir,

You will find enclosed the letters you left with me this morning, and another arrived from sir Robert Wilson.

General
O'Donoghue to
Lieut.-gen. sir
A. Wellesley,
K. B.

I enclose also a letter from Joseph Buonaparte, and another from Jourdan to Soult, taken upon a friar just brought in ; it is said in it that the British army is 25,000 strong at least, and notwithstanding

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Gen. O'Donoghue to lieutenant.
gen. sir A. Wellesley, K. B.

it orders Soult to fight you wherever he meets you, without discontinuing his march, which supposes he brings 30,000 men with him at least, and this is exactly the number the friar says he has.

In consequence of all, and of the approach on our left (besides the enemy being this morning at Sta. Olalla) of the corps under marshal Victor, general Cuesta has thought it advisable to follow you, and join you before you meet Soult, and that Victor comes up. What tortures him is the wounded, but he would always be obliged to leave them if he was forced from this position. He intends to march this evening to Oropesa.

I shall let colonel M'Kinnon know every thing this instant; and there is nothing in my power but I will do in favour of the British wounded. The French wounded will be taken good care of; orders have been given and repeated to that purpose.

(Signed) CHARLES O'DONOGHUE.

Talavera, 3d Aug. 1809.

Most excellent Sir,

General Cuesta
to M. Cornet.

I last night announced to your excellency, that, in consequence of marshal Soult's having entered Placentia, the English army set out this morning, with a fair prospect of beating him. A short time, however, after their march for Oropesa, I received a letter written by general Jourdan, and another by Joseph Napoleon, dated Vargas, 30th July, to Soult, through the means of the governor

of Avilla, who intrusted them to a Spaniard, who has brought them to me. In them, after acquainting him with the battle of the 27th and 28th, they announce to him, in strong terms, how much it is the interest of the cause that he should arrive as soon as possible at Placentia, and proceed from thence to attack the English army, which, they assure him, consists of 25,000 men; from which one must necessarily infer that Soult must have at least an equal force, which renders the victory doubtful for the English. On the other hand I have learnt that marshal Victor has moved from Magueda towards St. Olalla, which shews that he is waiting the arrival of marshal Soult, in order to attack us at one moment in front and in our flank.

The consideration of not leaving the English army exposed at Amaraz, or my own army here in a position entirely open on the left, which the English have left unoccupied, had determined me to march to-night to join general Wellesley, leaving here the appearance of a van guard, in order that the enemy may not immediately perceive this movement, and may respect Talavera, to which place I propose to return as soon as we shall have beaten marshal Soult; and, in case Victor should attack Talavera with his whole force, I shall at least have avoided the contingency of not being able to defend it.

I have made this movement known to general Venegas for his guidance, and to general Wellesley,

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Gen. Cuesta to
M. Cornel.

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to whom I have sent the original intercepted letters, for which reason I do not enclose them at present.

(Signed) CUESTA.

Talavera, 3d Aug. 1809.

Most excellent Sir,

Gen. Cuesta to
gen. Venegas.

Having received positive information that marshal Soult, having passed the Puerto de Banos, had already entered Placentia, the English army marched early this morning from hence, to give him battle, the Spanish army remaining at Talavera to maintain that post; but having received, since the departure of the English, certain intelligence that Soult has a greater force with him than was supposed, I have determined to march after them to-night, to reinforce them, and secure the victory against Soult, after which we shall return to attack Victor, who, at present, is ignorant of this movement, though he has a corps of observation of 8 or 10,000 men still in Magueda.

King Joseph, with the remainder of his forces, is, as I am informed, taking the route of Illescas, and no troops have been sent to Toledo, in which neighbourhood Zerafn and Lascy are keeping up an useless fire; all which I inform your excellency of for your guidance, persuaded that you will know how to frustrate any attempt which Joseph or Sebastiana may make against the army of Andalusia; bearing in mind that general actions, with

better disciplined troops than our own, do not
suit us.

(Signed)

CUESTA.

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Ciudad Rodrigu, 2d Aug. 1809.

Most excellent Sir,

I transmit your excellency the en-
closed diary of the movements and state of the
enemy in this province of Castilla la Vieja, from
the 28th of July last to the 2d of this month, both
included.

Duke del
Parque to M.
Cornel.

By the post of the 29th ultimo, from captain
Don Julian Sanchez, commander of the guerillas,
your excellency will perceive that this gallant
officer always distinguishes himself as often as he
meets the enemy, and that few weeks pass without
his meriting a reward; but as these cannot be con-
ferred so often, I have augmented by 50 horse the
guerillas under his command, giving him to under-
stand that this augmentation is made in considera-
tion of the manner in which he conducted himself
in the last action, and as a reward for his services.

Your excellency will likewise perceive that the
evacuation of Salamanca by the enemy is announced
to me under date of yesterday, and that only 300
sick remain in Zamora. I have consequently or-
dered my guerillas to advance, and to send me
speedy advice, that I may avail myself of the
moment to get possession of the ammunition,
flour, and other effects, which have remained in

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Salamanca, and preserve the tranquillity of that city.

(Signed)

THE DUKE OF PARQUE CASTRILLO.

Ciudad Rodrigo, 3d Aug. 1809.

Most excellent Sir,

Duke del
Parque to
M. Cornel.

General Beresford, after the conference of which I have already informed your excellency, and after I had, at his request, proposed to him three excellent positions for his army, more or less in advance of this fortress, and which he assured me had appeared to him very good, has determined to post all his troops in the position in which, according to my last proposition, he ought to have placed his left wing, that is, from San Jelicés de los Gallegos towards Barba de Puesto and Villan de la Gegua, along the left of the river Aquida. As soon as he communicated this resolution to me, I perceived that this plan was reduced to covering the frontiers of Portugal on that side, without intending to act offensively against the enemy, nor even to threaten him, as he would have done if he had taken up the position of Tamames, and changing it to the Sierra de Francia, according as circumstances should require; and in order to induce him to adopt this measure, by which he would prevent the evils and desolations caused by the enemy in that part of the province, which I was unable to do, and by which he would

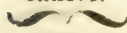
at least retard, if he did not entirely frustrate, the movements of the enemy upon Bejar and Puerto de Banos; I addressed to him the letter of which I enclose a copy, that he might see I had no hesitation in sending a single battalion of riflemen to protect the Sierra de Francia, where I knew there were more than 6000 of the enemy, assuring him that the nature of the country afforded my troops the means of charging the French, if they divided into smaller numbers than the said battalion, and to retire to the rough passages of the mountain whenever they were attacked by superior forces. I trusted that these reasonings would prevail upon him to make the movement I desired; but, finding I obtained nothing, I resolved to send this morning to Almeida my aid-de-camp, don Z. M. Zamora, and don M. J. Pecenti, chief magistrate of Salamanca, a person of talent, patriotism, and excellent character in all these parts, and well known to general Beresford, for the purpose of endeavouring to persuade him to make this movement, which, although it was too late to prevent the march of the enemy, it would always annoy them to find an army in their rear in case of their wishing to repass the Puerto de Banos, and might cause them considerable injury if they put in execution the daring project they announced of passing the Tagus. I do not yet know the progress made by my emissaries; but, as soon as they communicate it to me, I will acquaint

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Duke del
Parque to
M. Cornel.

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your excellency with it, if the result should be favourable or in any way important.

(Signed)

THE DUKE DEL PARQUE CASTRILLO.

Azutar, 4th Aug. 1809.

Army of Estremadura.

From the army
of Estremadura.

The day before yesterday the whole army retired from Talavera to Oropesa, and the duke of Albuquerque remained with his division and the van guard to maintain that point. Yesterday, however, at five in the evening, he received orders from the general-in-chief to abandon his position, and retire to the bridge of Arzobispo immediately, even though the enemy shall not have advanced; and in fact our guerillas had advanced as far as Santa Olalla, six leagues from Talavera, without seeing a single enemy.

To-day the whole army has passed the bridge of Arzobispo, and we occupy the left bank of the river.

The English being offended at the retreat of our army, and at the loss of our advantageous position, as also to find the destruction of Soult's army frustrated, as Victor may now join him, and, above all, our having left at Talavera 4000 of their wounded and 19 pieces of cannon, Wellesley has determined to retire towards Deleytosa, leaving, under these most critical circumstances, the discontent of our army in general; and every one

blames Cuesta's incapacity, and the weakness of various persons here.

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From the army
of Estremadura.

In Talavera have been left abandoned 4000 English wounded, and 1000 between French prisoners and our own people. The abandoned state of the houses in that town has left these unfortunate wretches without assistance; and the charity of various English surgeons, who have remained to attend them, even though the French should go there, is worthy of every praise.

The Enemy's Army.

Twelve or fourteen thousand men of Soult's army had descended, and were near Oropesa, ignorant of what had happened with Victor, and would have been victims of the English army, and a division of our's which was on their flank; but this unforeseen movement of Cuesta's has frustrated this plan.

It was supposed that Victor's army was going to attack us, but till now we neither know where he is nor what force he has; but it is evident his force has diminished greatly, various divisions having been detached to different points.

The French in Toledo were greatly pressed by Venegas's van guard whilst he was pursuing his march, which, it is feared, may be of disadvantage to him, as they may fall upon his force.

The bridge of Montalban was also in our possession.

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August.Lord visc. Cas-
tlereagh to
lieut.-gen. sir
A. Wellesley.

Sir,

Downing-street, 4th Aug. 1804

I had the honour to receive and lay before the king your two letters, dated Castello Branco, the 1st of July; and I am commanded by his majesty to express his gracious approbation of your proceedings, as detailed in those despatches.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) CASTLEREAGH.

Arzobispo, 4th Aug. 1809.

Most excellent Sir,

Gen. Cuesta to
M. Cornel.

I last night informed your excellency, from Talavera, that I was about to march to overtake and reinforce the English army, which had set out for Oropesa in the morning. In effect, I arrived at that town this morning, and found the English army still there, having received the intelligence of the enemy being in Naval Moral.

I had a conference with general Wellesley, who was of opinion that we should march to the bridge of Arzobispo, in order to secure our flank, and a retreat, if necessary. He immediately put the measure in execution, and I followed this evening, after having been joined by the fifth division, which I had detached two days before towards the Jutar.

The English general has passed the bridge, and taken a position on the left bank. My army is posted on the right bank, in front of the town.

The enemy have advanced to La Calzada, and their guerillas have appeared on our left.

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Gen. Cuesta to
M. Cornel.

From Oropesa I sent to the duke of Albuquerque, and to brigadier-general Zayas, to join me here, taking the road through La Calera with the second division of cavalry, and the van guard which had remained in front of Talavera.

(Signed) GREG. DE LA CUESTA.

While these matters were transacting between the allied armies and the enemy, the British minister, with unabated vigilance, thus communicated with his friend the secretary of state at home :—

Seville, 4th Aug. 1809.

Sir,

The interval which has elapsed since the date of my last despatches has been the longest and most eventful which has occurred in the course of my correspondence ; but this last circumstance has left me hardly time to write, as I was aware that the first news of the victory would reach England by a courier from sir Arthur Wellesley, who would sail immediately with the packet which might happen to be in Lisbon before mine could reach it. I had the less scruple in deferring it.

Right hon. J.
H. Frere to
Mr. secretary
Canning.

The letters from general Cuesta will give you his views of the events, of which you will undoubtedly have formed a more accurate and perfect idea from

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the report of sir Arthur Wellesley. The letter of the 22d states the occupation of Talavera, after dislodging the enemy; that of the 23d relates his having passed the morning in reconnoitring the position of the enemy on the other side of the Alberche, a delay which it appears (though not from his report) was contrary to the wishes of sir Arthur Wellesley, who was anxious to make the attack that day, and who was aware of the probability of the event, which general Cuesta mentions as a matter of such surprise in his letter of the 24th, namely, that the French would take advantage of the night to withdraw from the position which they then occupied. General Cuesta takes as little notice of any difference of opinion as to the propriety of pursuing them, or the inability of the English army to assist in any movements for that purpose, though it had been announced to him by sir Arthur Wellesley, and the truth of it was admitted by himself.

In that of the 26th from Santa Olalla there is the same silence upon this subject; on the contrary, he merely says that he was waiting till the English army which was in Casalajoz and San Roman (a position which I apprehend must have been very incorrectly assigned to the great body of the British force) should have time to come up with him.

He does, however, notice the circumstance of their being in want of provisions. This letter is

very remarkable for its tone of headlong presumption, for the want of information respecting the enemy's movements, which it announces at so critical a moment, and for his neglect of their own reports, though perfectly consonant to the plan which it was natural for them to adopt. Accordingly, all his views are to be found contradicted in his report of the evening of the same day. He then mentions the scarcity of bread in the English army, but takes no notice of any opinion of sir Arthur Wellesley respecting the separation of the two armies, by the advance of the Spaniards; and says that it is his intention to wait the arrival of the British in his position, and to fall back only in case of the immediate approach of the enemy. He concludes by saying that he is doing all in his power to convince the English of the necessity of putting themselves in motion, as if this necessity would remove the obstacles arising from the want of provisions, and as if this necessity arose from any other cause than his own obstinate determination to remain unsupported in an exposed position, in disregard of the remonstrances which had been made to him on the subject.

The letter of the 26th relates to the affair of Torrigos, which was fortunately recovered by the timely arrival and good conduct of the duke of Albuquerque.

I enclose here a very interesting private letter of the duke's, giving an account of this affair, and

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of the action which followed. General Cuesta concludes his letter by inclining to the opinion that the French do not meditate any further attack.

The next report, which is of the 28th (none having been sent on the 27th), gives the detail of the action up to that date; that of the 29th announces the retreat of the enemy, which had taken place that morning, and does justice to the bravery of the British troops, and to the distinguished qualities of sir Arthur Wellesley. The letter of the 30th states the loss of the enemy to be, by their own report, between 9 and 10,000 men, and that O'Farrel and Negrete were in the action. The letter of the 31st states that the enemy had withdrawn to a distance of about two or three leagues, leaving a large body of cavalry to watch the movements of his army, and that their present force amounted to 37,000 men. That of the first instant mentions the enemy having moved in the direction of Torrigos. The accounts which are mentioned of Soult's being at Bejar are not in unison with other detailed reports which I had an opportunity of seeing in the date of the 30th from Ciudad Rodrigo, from which it should seem that the movements from that part of the enemy's forces were hitherto very uncertain, and they had not yet made any decided push to the south of the line of the Tormes. The six enclosed despatches from general Venegas contain the detail of his movement to Aranjuez, and of some attempts made upon

Toledo by Lasey. General Venegas appears to have been placed in a most unfavourable situation, and positively kept in ignorance by general Cuesta of the inability of the British army to advance ; he was exposed to be cut off and destroyed, if the French had marched against him from Toledo instead of directing their attack against the combined army. He was at last indebted for this information to a despatch which was sent him from hence, in consequence of a letter which I had received from sir Arthur Wellesley ; for, as you have seen above, government here could have no idea from the reports which they had received of the real state of things. This courier brought orders, conformable to the intelligence of which he was the bearer, directing general Venegas to suspend his operations, and to take up such a defensive position as would secure him from being beaten. Immediately after the receipt of this despatch, general Venegas received from general Cuesta the news of the battle of Talavera. Unfortunately general Venegas, instead of reflecting upon the circumstance by which his instructions were dictated, and the change which had been produced by so important an event as the action of Talavera, adhered to the strict letter of his instructions, which if he had not thought himself obliged to do, there is no doubt but that he might have entered Madrid, where, independent of all other considerations, he would, with a view, namely, to the secu-

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rity of the corps under his command, have been infinitely better placed than in his present situation, which cannot by any means be considered as a secure one. But it is now too late to repair this oversight.

The surprise of a part of the enemy at a post in the immediate neighbourhood of Aranjuez by a Spanish detachment inferior in number, and its fortunate issue, is one of the many instances of the success which seems almost constantly to attend the Spaniards in enterprises of this nature.

Seville, Aug. 5, 1809.

Sir,

Right hon. J.
H. Frere to
Mr. secretary
Canning.

On the important subject of the supply of the British army, I received the enclosed letter from sir Arthur Wellesley, dated the 24th of last month, from Talavera de la Reyna, in which he states the destitute situation of the troops under his command, who had not, as he says, even bread to eat, though the Spanish army was well supplied, and the prisoners taken from the enemy uniformly healthy and well fed, and even their horses in good condition. Sir A. Wellesley at the same time states, that he had complied already with the only engagements which he had ever entered into with general Cuesta; and that, in case the British army was not better supplied, he should think it his duty to withdraw into Portugal, in which country, (though the means are

infinitely less,) yet the fact was, that his army had never been left in want of provisions, except one single day on the frontiers of Galicia.

I went immediately to the junta, to whom I communicated the letter, and upon the subject of its contents there followed a very warm discussion between me and some of the members. On my return home I wrote the enclosed note to M. Garay, in which I recapitulated the most material points of the discussion. In the course of it M. Garay had said, with great propriety, that what hurt them most was, that their own army should have been supplied while the English were in want. Orders were sent the same evening to general Cuesta, telling him that it was the intention of the junta that the British troops should be supplied even in preference to their own, and directing him to take measures to punish the magistrates in the Vera de Placentia, who had been wanting in the performance of their duty. Orders were likewise sent at the same time to the junta of Badajoz to appoint two commissioners proper for the purpose, who should apprehend the delinquent magistrates, and further the supply of provisions and beasts of carriage to the army. M. Garay, who is member for that city, informs me, since, that he is satisfied with the choice which has been made. The various papers were officially communicated to me a day or two afterwards in a note from M. Garay, which recites the answer of the mi-

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nister of war. A few days after I received a letter in very warm terms (though certainly not more so than the occasion justified) from sir A. Wellesley, for the purpose of being communicated to M. Garay, enclosing a copy of one which he had received from that minister. Wishing to avoid any needless mortification to M. Garay, with whose conduct during the whole business I had every reason to be satisfied, I did not communicate it to the junta in a body, but desired a commission of a few persons to be named, to whom I proceeded to communicate it, with some explanations and observations which appeared to me expedient. M. Garay received it in the manner which I state in my enclosed answer to sir A. Wellesley, to which I beg leave to refer, and to which I have very little to add, except that the orders there mentioned have since been given. These related to some apprehension expressed by sir A. Wellesley in the letter in his own hand, to which I allude, respecting the advance of Soult, and the measures to be taken in consequence by the duque de Parque, marshal Beresford, and the marquis Romana; as likewise orders to general Cuesta to put at the disposition of sir A. Wellesley any corps of cavalry which he might wish to detach for that service, no cavalry being to be found elsewhere.

Though accounts were received from Ciudad Rodrigo, which by their date appeared to remove these apprehensions, and to which I have already

alluded in my despatch of yesterday, I thought it advisable at all events to press the sending of these orders. The despatch from Lisbon, alluded to at the close of this letter, contains merely a favourable report of the discipline of marshal Beresford's army.

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Right hon. J.
H. Frere to
Mr. secretary
Canning.

The rank of captain-general, offered to sir A. Wellesley, was intended as a step to enable him to supersede general Cuesta. You will pardon the irregularity of referring to an enclosure as part of a despatch; but you will see that there are some points of it which I must naturally wish to avoid recapitulating.

The marquis of Wellesley arrived at Cadiz on the 1st, after a very short passage; and the messenger Basset delivered to me your despatch, conveying his majesty's gracious approbation of my general conduct, which I received with the feeling which it was calculated to convey to my mind, and for which I beg leave to express my most dutiful and grateful acknowledgment of his majesty's goodness.—I have the honour to be, with great truth and respect, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

J. H. FRERE.

Ocana, Aug. 4, 1809.

Most excellent Sir,

At half past five *p. m.* I received from general Cuesta the despatch of which the enclosed is an exact copy.

General Venegas to M. de Cornet.

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August.General Venegas to M. de
Cornel.

The plan which I had proposed, and which I transmitted by one of yesterday's *partes*, ensured me better, as it appears to me, the destruction of the enemy, beating together the remains of Joseph's army, and successively waiting for, or falling upon, that of Soult; but it did not arrive in time to fix the attention of general Cuesta, nor in all probability will he have been of my opinion, for my reflections are obvious, and cannot but present themselves to all.

Your excellency is perfectly aware that this army is thus left to its own force, inferior in number to those of the enemy; and, when the captain-general acknowledges that these are better disciplined than our own, he leaves me no choice but to commence a retreat, shamefully as being the second, and odious in the eyes of the villages we may have occupied and left behind; and which would, consequently, dispirit the troops, diminishing their moral strength, and destroying most sensibly the national enthusiasm, especially in all those places.

These facts, which are immediately before my eyes, determine me to remain and fight if I am attacked, preferring to be cut in pieces rather than submit to a shameful flight; and let your excellency consider how much more deeply I should have been convicted, if, from a too scrupulous attention to the order of the captain-general, I had

marched upon Madrid, relying upon the promised support of the combined armies.

(Signed)

VENEGAS.

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Ocana, Aug. 5, 1809.

Most excellent Sir,

The first, second, and third divisions, General Venegas to M. de Cornel. have this day crowned themselves with glory on the banks of the Tagus, in Aranjuez. The enemy attacked them three times with the greatest obstinacy, and was as often repulsed. Those who were present in the action represent the fire as terrible, and the serenity and bravery of our troops as above all praise. The force which attacked was very considerable, and is stated at about 14 or 15,000 men. The action lasted from five in the evening till eight at night, when the enemy gave way, and retired.

As soon as I shall receive the details I will transmit them to your excellency for the information of his majesty, and that the chief officers and troops of these gallant divisions may be rewarded.

Notwithstanding this advantage, I have determined upon retreating to a point where the enemy can only come against my front, and where I shall not incur the terrible risk of their cutting off my retreat by the way of Toledo, and penetrating, on any disaster befalling us, to Despena Perros, apprized of the distance of the combined English and Spanish army.

(Signed)

FRANCISCO VENEGAS.

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The following short note exhibits the necessities of the armies in respect to provision, and tends to explain the discussions on that subject. Any remark is here purposely forborne.

Deleytasa, Aug. 5, 1809.

My dear Grandson,

Translation of
a letter signed
Neudares.

To-day the English have taken one hundred quintals of biscuit, which were coming to us from Seville. They have detained another quantity of horses which were coming to us laden from Puente de Maestra; and the day before yesterday they received 450 quintals more. The towns, and the shepherds also, must contribute that article, while they rob us with their troops, and I see that it is impossible to provide a supply of bread for our own; I have, however, obtained these eight loaves for his excellency the general, and to-morrow I will send more, if there remains food here, and I shall receive supplies.

Command me, &c. &c.

(Signed) NEUDARES.

The laudable anxiety of the Spaniards to encourage by rewards is frequently apparent.

Tembleque, Aug. 6, 1809.

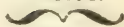
Most excellent Sir,

General Venegas to M.
Cornel.

In pursuance of your excellency's orders under date of the 3d inst. I shall reward Eugenio Velasco and his party for the death of the

French aid-de-camp, &c. The papers found upon him were of no interest.

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Gen Venegas
to M. Cornel

To-morrow I will send your excellency the account of yesterday's action, which was in a great degree brilliant and glorious, and I do not think that in the whole we lost 220 between killed and wounded. The enemy's loss was much more considerable. According to the advice sent me to-day he still remains between the Tagus and the Xarama, but without approaching; and the only firing that has taken place has been between some small parties which approached the bridges and fords.

Being obliged to divide my attention between Aranjuez and Toledo (in which city nothing particular had occurred up to half past eleven last night, when I received the last advices from general Zairain, who had joined), I have in Aranjuez the 1st division, with about 1500 horse, to which I shall add the flying camp commanded by colonel Osorio, with those of Zea and Laforte, under his orders. The 2d division is in Ocana, the 3d in La Guardia, and the 4th in their head-quarters, forming an echelon, and ready to march in this order to such point as circumstances may require.

(Signed) FRANCISCO VENEGAS.

Arzobispo, Aug. 6, 1809.

Most excellent Sir,

I last night informed your excellency that my army was passing the bridge of General Cuesta to M. Cornel.

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August.General Cuesta
to M. Cornel.

Arzobispo, except the van guard, which remained on the right bank. The English, who yesterday set out for the Mesas de Ibor, continued to-day their march to the bridge of Almaraz, with the intention of rendering it passable, and fortifying it, in case they may find it convenient to pass it. This intelligence I have just received from major-general O'Donoghue, whom I have just sent with lord M'Duff to point out to general Wellesley the importance of the measure.

This morning the enemy's guerillas appeared near this, and a firing began between them and ours, though without their making any particular effort until about mid-day, when a column of infantry, and two of cavalry, all pretty strong, came up, and attacked my van guard, which, according to my instructions, retired in good order to this side the bridge. The French continued the attack with obstinacy to take the bridge; but, in spite of the brisk fire of artillery and musketry which they kept up, they were repulsed. It is most probable that they will repeat the attack to-morrow, as they are still in sight, constructing fresh batteries.

I trust, however, they will not be able to succeed.

Hitherto they have only been engaged with our van guard, and the army remains concealed in the neighbourhood, ready to fall upon any part of them which may succeed in forcing the bridge.

(Signed) GREG. DE LA CUESTA.

After the details which have been given, any further account of the minuter operations of this period must appear supererogatory; the following sketch, however, drawn on the spot, though already before the public, has claims to insertion from its peculiar traits of interest to the troops likely to be employed on this service, or which have not hitherto joined an active army.

There is at the same time much spirit in the sketch, which it is not presumed to render complete, nor in all particulars exactly.

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It is thus the writer commences :—

An hour before day-light, on the 17th of July, the British quitted Placentia; and, after a march of two leagues, the infantry halted near Malpartida de Placentia, on a plain, where was not a single bush to shelter the troops from the scorching heat of the sun. Water was very scarce and bad.

Recollections
of the important
affair of
Talavera.

Brigadier-general Fane, with the brigade of heavy cavalry, was advanced two leagues in front.

July the 18th, the army moved from their ground at half past three in the morning, and in four hours reached the Tietar, which was crossed by a temporary bridge; the one of boats being rendered unserviceable by the Spanish peasantry, on the appearance of the French. At two *p. m.* the troops halted, and huddled close to the river. The commander of the forces, with his staff, passed the column to Mayadas,

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a small village about a mile beyond. General Cuesta's army crossed the Tagus this morning at Almaraz, according to the plan of operations concerted betwixt him and sir Arthur Wellesley; and sir Robert Wilson, whose corps had hitherto preceded the advance of the British, moved by a road to the left, after passing the Tietar.

A little wine was this day brought into camp by the peasantry, but nothing besides.

July the 19th, the army was again in motion before day-light, and proceeded until noon along the banks of the Tietar, in a line parallel with the march of the Spanish army. The heat of the sun had been extremely oppressive for these three days past. After a march of twelve hours the troops halted in a beautiful wood, near the village of Centinello. It was generally understood that the French out-posts were at the distance of only three leagues from the advance of the British under major-general Mackenzie, who, supported by general Fane's brigade of heavy cavalry, was about three miles in front of the main body.

By the latest information received of the enemy, it appeared that Victor had made the following disposition of his forces, amounting, according to report, to about 30,000 men.

His advanced guard of cavalry occupied the city of Talavera de la Reyna.

His right, flanked by a rising ground, and secured by heavy artillery, rested upon the Alberche,

which protected his front, the line being extended along the banks of that river to the Tagus, and eastward in the direction of Toledo; in the neighbourhood of which city, Venegas, who had been detached by Cuesta, with 18,000 men, was directed to arrive on the 24th instant.

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The intended plan of attack was formed on this information.

General Cuesta's army, supported by the British cavalry, was to force the bridge over the Alberche, and attack the left of the enemy whilst the British infantry forded the river in front, and endeavoured to turn his right.

Venegas, after gaining possession of Toledo, in which the enemy was supposed to have left a very inconsiderable force, was to pass the Tagus, and place himself betwixt Madrid and the rear of the French army, co-operating, if possible, with sir Robert Wilson, who had been for some days at Escalona, with the Lusitanian legion, consisting of 2000 infantry, 500 cavalry, and a few field-pieces. Sir Robert had succeeded in opening a communication with the capital.

July the 20th, the army moved forward at three in the morning; and, on leaving the wood, entered a long extensive plain, which reached to Oropesa, six leagues distant. About four o'clock the column halted a mile beyond the town, after a most fatiguing march. A strong picquet of French cavalry had been here on the preceding evening; and

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at their departure this morning they plundered the town, and carried off all the bread and wine they could find.

In the course of this afternoon Cuesta's advanced guard entered Oropesa, and the junction of the two armies was effected.

July the 21st, the generale beat at the usual early hour; but after the troops were under arms, the march was suspended to give time for the Spanish army to take a position in front of the British. About half-past ten o'clock the army of Estremadura halted to refresh, at the distance of half a league, in number 35,000, including 7000 cavalry. The infantry appeared strong able-bodied men, but deficient in discipline. They are the same troops who behaved so well at the battle of Medellin, on which occasion the conduct of the infantry was cool and resolute, and they positively turned the left wing of Victor's army; but the cavalry gave way when their services were most wanted.

At four in the afternoon the whole of the troops were drawn out; and general Cuesta, with his adjutant-general O'Donoghue, accompanied by sir Arthur Wellesley and his staff, reviewed the British line.

The Spanish leader appeared an infirm old man, so much so that he is obliged to be lifted into his saddle; and as he cannot remain long at a time on horseback, an ancient family coach, drawn by six mules, is in constant attendance.

General Cuesta is said to possess the entire confidence of his troops, and this may be the reason why he has been selected to command an army of patriots, which ought to have an officer of youth, vigour, and talent, at its head. The duke of Albuquerque, who commands the cavalry, is esteemed an active officer, zealous in the cause of his country. Report speaks highly of the military talents of general O'Donoghue.

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On the morning of the 22d the combined army was in motion before day-break, and advanced along the extensive plain towards Talavera. Few officers had ever previously seen so large a body acting as if by one impulse, and marching in one direction. It was in truth a sublime and magnificent spectacle, and the occasion was calculated to excite the most exalted ideas in a soldier's bosom.

About six o'clock a heavy cannonade commenced in front, and continued at intervals until three in the afternoon; a little before which the combined army *bivouacked* within a mile and a half of Talavera, whence the enemy was dislodged in the course of the morning by the advance of the British and Spaniards. The French cavalry retreated over the Alberche, closely pursued.

Exactly at four in the morning of the 23d instant the several divisions of the army moved out of the wood in which they had reposed the preceding night, and were halted almost immediately

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afterwards. At eight o'clock the troops again advanced, and, about noon, arrived near the ruins of an old convent, within two miles of the Alberche, on the opposite bank of which the enemy was posted in force, when an order was given for the British to return to their former ground. This unexpected movement occasioned a variety of reports and surmises. By some it was said that sir Arthur Wellesley and Cuesta had disagreed, and the Spaniards were averse to engage on a Sunday ; others asserted that the preparations of the latter were not complete, and that he waited for ammunition : however, it was generally understood that the position of the French was to be attacked on the following morning.

An hour after midnight, on the 24th of July, the army assembled without beat of drum, and advanced left in front, in silence, and with the most perfect regularity, to the expected attack. About six the guards arrived within sight of the Alberche, when they perceived with surprise that the enemy had abandoned his position, and was in full retreat. The commander of the forces and lieutenant-general Sherbrooke had passed the Alberche with a considerable body of cavalry, and major-general Mackenzie's division of infantry, and hung on the rear of the enemy's retiring columns. The advance of the British halted at the village of Casalegas, one league beyond the Alberche. Cuesta pushed forward his out-posts two leagues further,

to Santa Olalla, late the head-quarters of marshal Victor.

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After halting for orders until noon (during which interval the officers crossed the river to see the French huts, which were remarkable for their neatness and regularity) the troops returned to their former position, on the wood of olives. It was now a subject of general regret that the French had not been attacked on the preceding day, even without the co-operation of the Spaniards. Whatever was the real cause of this retrograde movement, the disappointment of the troops at not being led against the enemy, whom they had made so many harassing marches to come up with, was very apparent. An advance, however, at the present moment, was doubtless rendered either unnecessary or impracticable from circumstances, which were known only to the commander of the forces. Indeed, the difficulty of procuring supplies for so large an army might have proved an insuperable obstacle. So far, hitherto, had success attended the movements of the allies, that the enemy found himself compelled to quit his position on the Alberche, which the appearance of Cuesta's force alone would never have effected.

In the course of this day the conduct of the Spanish leader was very generally commented upon. He was considered a man of strict honour, and to possess an invincible hatred to the French; but his dilatory and half-digested measures did not

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Talavera as it
 is.

Talavera dela Reyna is a large town, with several handsome streets, but an air of desolation and ruin reigned throughout ; many of the houses were deserted, and the appearance of the whole place presented a sad picture of the ravages of war, which seemed to have been in a peculiar manner inflicted on this devoted town. The French troops, during their stay, had been guilty of the greatest excesses ; a number of houses were completely destroyed, and the furniture burnt for fuel. In every quarter were to be seen marks of the devastation they had committed, which must have imprinted a lasting hatred in the minds of the unfortunate inhabitants. Even the satisfaction felt by those who remained in the town, at being delivered from an enemy who had caused them so much misery and vexation, could not prevent an air of melancholy from appearing in their countenances on viewing the destruction of property and the havoc made on all sides.

The cathedral, a handsome modern building, remained uninjured ; the French being contented with carrying off the splendid ornaments used in their ceremonies of religion. The very fine altarpiece, by Murillo, also yet uninjured, excited universal admiration. In the church of St. Antonio the enemy destroyed everything, and converted it into a barrack for infantry.

On the 26th a heavy cannonade commenced soon after day-light, and continued until four o'clock in the afternoon, when the commander of the forces, who had rode out at an early hour, turned from the field in high spirits. The action was betwixt the advance of the French and Spanish out-posts, which fell back upon the position heretofore occupied by the enemy on the Alberche. The Spaniards lost from three to four hundred men killed and wounded; several of the latter were brought into Talavera in the course of the afternoon.

The cannonade was renewed next morning, the 27th; and the Spaniards, covered by the British cavalry and major-general Mackenzie's division of infantry, continued to retire upon the town. As the day advanced, the intention of the enemy to try the issue of a general engagement became no longer doubtful; and about three *p.m.* his columns, which moved forward after crossing the Alberche with great rapidity, having approached within two leagues of Talavera, the several divisions of the British army were placed in the positions previously chosen, where they remained, awaiting the attack.

Brigadier-general Alexander Campbell, with two brigades of infantry, was posted on the right, near an unfinished re-doubt; the guards, general Cameron's brigade, and the king's German legion, formed the centre, under lieutenant-general Sherbrooke; and major-general Hill's division extended

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along the rising grounds on the left, flanked by a heavy battery. Major-general Mackenzie, who commanded the advance, had previously withdrawn his troops after the whole of the Spaniards recrossed the Alberche; and this movement was executed with the utmost judgment and ability by that gallant officer. His division formed a second line in rear of the centre.

The cavalry was commanded by lieutenant-general Payne. Major-general Cotton's light brigade supported the right and centre; brigadier-general Anson's, and the heavy brigade under general Fane, were on the left.

Brigadier-general Howarth commanded the royal artillery, and the several batteries were under the superintendence of lieutenant-colonels Robe and Framlingham.

The ground in front of the British was principally open, but intersected with roads leading to the town, and the bed of a small river, which had been formed by the winter torrents, and was at present dry.

The Spanish infantry, formed in two lines, and supported by the king's regiment of cavalry, were posted behind the mud enclosures of the olive-grounds and vineyards, extending from the right of general Alexander Campbell's position to the suburbs and town of Talavera, which they also occupied, having their right flank by the Tagus.

The duke of Albuquerque was in rear of the left

of the whole line, with the main body of the Spanish cavalry: and lieutenant-general don Luis Bassecourt was subsequently placed with about 3000 light troops in the valley below the left of the British, to keep in check a body of the enemy who appeared in the mountains beyond, which were, however, at too great a distance to have any effect upon the impending contest.

The Spanish army was commanded by Cuesta, general-in-chief; and the several divisions of infantry were under the orders of lieutenant-generals don Francisco d'Eguia, second in command, the marquis del Partago, don Rafael Maglano, and don Juan de Henestrosa.

The French army, in number nearly 50,000 strong, was commanded by marshal Victor, assisted by marshal Jourdain and general Sebastiani, under the direction of Joseph Buonaparte, in person.

About half-past six o'clock the enemy appeared in considerable force on the heights opposite the centre of the British line, and opened a heavy cannonade of shot and shells, which was instantaneously returned from the principal battery placed on a commanding eminence in the rear of general Hill's division. At the same time the French made a vigorous attack on the left, where, after a most obstinate conflict, they were completely repulsed at the point of the bayonet. The enemy also pushed forward several corps of infantry, supported by a strong division of cavalry on the right,

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with a view of carrying the town of Talavera, in which object he failed, and was driven back by the fire from the Spanish batteries. The cannonade continued on both sides until dusk.

In the course of the night the enemy made a second assault upon the height; from whence, after gaining a momentary possession, he was dislodged by general Hill, with prodigious slaughter.

At two in the morning the Spanish line was alarmed at all points by the approach of the enemy's light troops, who were received with a brisk discharge of musketry, which ceased in about ten minutes, when the silence of night again prevailed on the field of battle.

At length day-light broke upon the contending armies, who were drawn up opposite to each other in the positions they respectively occupied at the beginning of the action on the preceding evening. About six the engagement was renewed, and continued without intermission until eleven o'clock, when the firing ceased, as if by mutual consent, for nearly three hours, during which interval the French appeared to be employed in cooking, and the British army reposed on the ground, seemingly regardless of the enemy's presence. It was at this time also the wounded were carried off to the rear; and, while engaged in this painful duty, the British and French soldiers shook hands with each other, and expressed their admiration of the gallantry displayed by the troops of

both nations. The principal efforts of the French throughout the morning were again directed upon the left; but major-general Hill successfully repelled every attempt to turn his position, and obliged the enemy to retire with considerable loss.

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Sir Arthur Wellesley, with his staff, observed the progress of the battle on a height to the left of the British line. From this point he witnessed every movement that was made, and in the midst of the hottest fire issued the necessary orders with his characteristic coolness and judgment. Two of his aides-de-camp, captains Bouverie and Burgh, were wounded by his side.

At one *p. m.* the enemy was observed bringing up fresh troops and forming his columns, apparently for the purpose of renewing the action; and in fact about two o'clock the French again advanced under a heavy cannonade, and made a general attack upon the whole of the position occupied by the British.

The enemy's attacking columns on the right had arrived within a short distance of the unfinished redoubt, when general Alexander Campbell made a vigorous charge with his division, supported by two battalions of Spanish infantry, and drove them back with the loss of their artillery.

The efforts of the enemy on the left were equally unsuccessful as before, and a charge made by brigadier-general Anson, with the 23d light dragoons and German hussars, upon a solid column of in-

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fantry, although attended with a severe loss to the former regiment, had the effect of checking their further advance in that direction.

Meanwhile the centre was warmly engaged. Exactly at three o'clock several heavy columns advanced upon this point, and deployed with the utmost precision into line as they entered the plain which lay betwixt the heights occupied by the hostile armies. This was the grand attack; and, on the first indication of the enemy's intention, general Sherbrooke gave directions that his division should prepare for the charge. At this awful moment all was silent, except a few guns of the enemy, answered by the British artillery on the hill. The French came on over the rough and broken ground in the valley, in the most imposing manner, and with great resolution, and were met by the British with their usual undaunted firmness. As if with one accord the division advanced against the enemy, whose ranks were speedily broken, and thrown into confusion by a well-directed volley. The impetuosity of the soldiers was not to be repressed; and the brigade on the immediate left of the guards being halted, that flank, from its advanced situation in the eagerness of pursuit, became exposed to the enemy, who had already given way, and deserted his guns on the hill in front, until, observing this part of the line unsupported, the French rallied, and returned with increased numbers to their attack upon the centre.

Brigadier-general Harry Campbell now gave orders for the guards to retire to their original position in line, and the 1st battalion of the 48th regiment was directed to cover this movement by the commander of the forces, who saw and provided for every emergency during the tremendous conflict. Foiled at all points, the French withdrew the remains of the columns which had been unsuccessfully opposed to the centre; they, however, continued the fire of their artillery, and the engagement, which had been renewed this morning with the rising of the sun, ceased only with its setting.

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About six in the evening, the long dry grass having caught fire, the flames spread rapidly over the field of action, and consumed in their fatal progress numbers of the dead and wounded.

A dim and cheerless moon threw a faint lustre over the surrounding objects after the close of day. Small parties were sent out to bring in the wounded; the enemy was employed in a similar manner, and had made large fires along the whole front of his extensive line.

The troops lay upon their arms this second night, without provisions of any kind: water even was scarce. It was fully expected that the French would renew the attack in the morning, but they retired under cover of the night, leaving in the hands of the British 20 pieces of artillery, and some prisoners. Their rear guard, consisting of cavalry,

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alone remained on the right bank of the Alberche at day-break. The retreat was certainly conducted with ability, and was not generally known in the British army until long after the enemy had abandoned his position.

Soon after eight o'clock the British quitted their positions in the field, and again huddled in the wood of olives. About nine the light brigade under general Robert Crawford arrived, having marched twelve Spanish leagues in the preceeding twenty-four hours.

Motives of curiosity induced several officers to visit Talavera on the afternoon of the 29th of July. The town appeared almost deserted; here and there a few soldiers were walking about, looking for the quarters of their wounded comrades. The houses were for the greater part shut up; the inhabitants, previous to the engagement, had fled across the Tagus with their most valuable effects, and were not yet returned.

The French are said to be continuing their retreat. From an officer, who was taken prisoner on the banks of the Tagus, the following information has been obtained:

When the combined army arrived in front of Talavera on the 22d of July,

Marshal Victor's force amounted to . . .	28,000
Joined him from Toledo	8,000

Carried forward	36,000
-----------------	--------

	Brought forward	36,000
On the 25th two regiments of cavalry, the		
14th and 26th infantry	3,000	
Joseph Bonaparte arrived on the after-		
noon of the 27th, with the guards		
from Madrid	8,000	
		<hr/>
Total number of the enemy engaged . .	47,000	
Joseph retreated on the evening of the 28th, and		
slept at Caselegas.		
On the 29th his guards moved forward to Santa		
Olalla, when they halted for the night .	8,000	
Late on that day a division was sent off		
towards Toledo of	9,000	
Killed and wounded on the 27th and 28th,		
fully	*8,000	
Remains with Victor	22,000	
		<hr/>
		47,000

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The above facts stated by this officer accord with the information received from two dragoons taken with him, examined separately, and also with the intelligence obtained from the alcade at Cebolla, who is known by the magistrates to be a true patriot. To a certainty (says the account from which this is derived) Joseph is off, but whether to Madrid or Toledo this officer does not know. It is equally certain that a strong division was sent off on the evening of the 29th to sustain Toledo.

* It is certain the loss of the French in killed and wounded was at least 14,000, according to some credible accounts; but, if so, the disposable force must have been still greater.

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Sebastiana had a command in the battle, and marshal Jourdain remained with Joseph Buonaparte until he quitted the field. Victor commanded under the immediate direction of Joseph.

The French army is in the greatest distress for provisions, and the troops have had little bread from the day they were first driven out of Talavera, and none from the 27th until the 31st, when four thousand pounds of biscuit arrived from Madrid, and a farther supply was expected, but is supposed to have been taken.

On the arrival of Joseph on the 27th, he publicly reproached Victor for not having beaten or taken the British and Spanish armies already, and assured the army that this should be done on the 28th. He was seen on the evening of that day retiring from the field, the picture of melancholy and disappointment.

This prisoner heard Victor say, on the afternoon of the 28th, that he felt himself abandoned by Soult. On the 30th it was known in the French army that the latter was coming round by Placentia with 12,000 men.

When the troops came from Toledo to join Victor there was only 1500 left in that city, and Joseph withdrew the whole of the garrison from Madrid, except about 3000 men, of whom a part were stationed in the fort of El Retiro.

It caused much consternation in the French army to hear, during the engagement, that Toledo was bombarded by Venegas, (whose operations were

restrained by an order of the junta,) and that the British had been reinforced by general Crawford's division.

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General Morlot was killed, and Lapice received a mortal wound on the 28th, of which he died the next day. An immense number of colonels and field-officers were killed and wounded; and the oldest soldiers in the French army declared the day after the action that they had never seen more determined fighting; and all agreed that in the war with Spain this was the first time they had met with soldiers. They wondered where the Spaniards were; as their position was covered with wood, our allies were not seen by the French.

The sick and wounded of the army are in a shocking state; and this prisoner thinks the retreat is suspended to give as much time as possible to send away the wounded, which is almost impracticable, as they have scarcely any means of conveyance.

All letters from France are opened by order of Joseph Buonaparte, and those burned which contain bad news. The French army, however, has heard of Napoleon's defeat in Austria.

The report of this day is, that marshal Soult is advancing with 12 or 15,000 men on Placentia, from which he was only 10 leagues distant on the 30th ultimo.

It is now necessary to turn to a relation of the events which caused a gallant and successful Bri-

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tish army to retire precipitately from the scene of their late triumphs, and act upon the defensive.

During the stay of the army at Talavera, both before and after the action, the supplies of every kind had been very insufficient, and the inhabitants of that town evinced no disposition to relieve the wants of the British, and to accommodate the sick and wounded. Their removal from Talavera, therefore, was become an object of too much interest to be any longer delayed, particularly as, by marshal Soult's arrival at Placentia, the provisions expected from that quarter, and for which arrangements were made by the commissariat, had fallen into the enemy's hands.

On the morning of the 3d of August the British army moved from Talavera; but, for an hour after the troops were under arms, they remained uncertain whether it was sir Arthur Wellesley's intention to advance upon Madrid, or proceed against marshal Soult, in the contrary direction. Their doubts, however, were soon at an end, for, on leaving the wood of olives, the army began to retrace its former steps, and about two in the afternoon again halted near the town of Oropesa. Although, by this retrograde movement, the British were of necessity compelled to leave behind a considerable number of their sick and wounded, yet less anxiety was felt on this account, as they relied on the Spaniards keeping Victor in check, should he, on being informed of sir Arthur Wellesley's departure, again

attempt to advance: besides, under any circumstances, it would not have been consistent with humanity to have attempted the removal of more of the sick and wounded than were really brought off.

Cuesta, whose force remained nearly entire, having taken little share in the action, promised to maintain the position which the British had so successfully defended; but, in a few hours after their march, the Spanish leader abandoned his post, and, with the whole of his army, followed the route of the British.

This conduct of general Cuesta increased the embarrassments of the situation in which the British army was already placed by marshal Soult's arrival at Placentia; and all hopes of any effectual co-operation being now at an end, the commander of the forces determined to withdraw his troops over the bridge of Arzobispo, with a view of covering Seville and the South of Spain, and at the same time to preserve the communication open with Lisbon.

In pursuance of these objects, on the following morning the march was resumed; and, after having experienced considerable difficulties and privations, the whole of the British army arrived in the valley watered by the Elmonte on the 11th instant.

Although there can be no pleasure in dwelling on the particulars of a march performed under such circumstances, yet, perhaps, a detail of the daily progress made by the British troops, through these

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inhospitable mountains, may prove somewhat interesting.

At day-break on the 4th instant the troops were under arms, but did not move from the ground on which they *bivouacked* until nine o'clock. A very small quantity of bread was issued to the army, which then marched down two leagues to the bridge of Arzobispo, and, crossing the Tagus, halted for the night on the opposite bank. It was reported, that the Spaniards, on the approach of the enemy, had removed the bridge of Almaraz, and many expected the one at this place would have been destroyed, the more effectually to secure the rear.

August the 5th. The troops advanced six leagues over a difficult country, and about four in the afternoon *bivouacked* on a hill near the village of Val-de-la-Cosa.

August the 6th. This day's march, three leagues only, was through a mountainous district. About noon the column halted in a romantic spot, near the small river d'Ibor. Several working parties were employed in dragging the artillery up the heights until a late hour.

August the 7th. The country, this day, was even more mountainous and rugged than that through which the army passed yesterday; consequently, little progress was made. The heat was excessive, and the troops began to sink under their fatigues. The army had been without bread on the 5th and 6th. A small quantity of flour was received

yesterday; but no wine could be procured to raise the drooping spirits and recruit the exhausted strength of the soldiers. Among other reports of the day, it was said that an officer had crossed the Tagus, and observed the march of the French over the plain, in the direction of Arzobispo.

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August the 8th. Although the troops assembled at four in the morning, yet the march was deferred nearly five hours, to give the artillery time to ascend the heights.—About noon, halted on the banks of a small stream, a league from Deleytosa. The villages through which the British had passed, since leaving Arzobispo, were nearly deserted and ruinous.—Not one article of the necessaries of life could be procured in any of them.

August the 9th. At five the troops were in motion.—About eight o'clock passed the town of Deleytosa, and halted two miles beyond, in a wood on the left of the town of Truxillo, situated on a hill, apparently at the distance of six leagues.

A very inadequate proportion of flour and biscuit was issued yesterday, but the troops received a tolerable supply of the latter this morning.

Marshal Soult, after making an unsuccessful attempt to force the bridge of Arzobispo, passed the Tagus, with a body of cavalry, at a ford about two miles above, and surprised the Spaniards in their position. The latter retreated, after a slight resistance, pursued by the French. It was feared the whole of their artillery would fall into the enemy's

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hands. The duke of Albuquerque had arrived at head-quarters.

In the general orders of this day the army was informed that the charge of three-pence per diem only would be made to those troops who had not received their rations regularly since the 22d of July. During the march a number of bullocks, sheep, and goats, were driven forward, for the daily consumption of the army. The provisions were cooked over-night for the following day, and, being divided into messes, each man carried his dinner in his tin. This was in general the arrangement throughout the campaign.

August the 10th. This day the troops halted, but were kept in readiness to move at a moment's notice. It was asserted that the French were marching to the south, by the way of Guadaloupe. [This last name is doubtful.]

August the 11th. Yesterday's halt proved extremely serviceable from the repose it afforded to the troops and to the horses of the artillery, whose labours had been very severe for some days past.—The Spaniards indeed declared that the road by which the army marched over the mountains was impracticable; but, contrary to their opinion, the whole of the artillery and stores were ultimately brought forward. Many horses died from fatigue, and the troops, in several places, were obliged to drag the guns and ammunition waggons up the heights.

The troops moved off their ground at day-light, and about eight o'clock came upon the high road from Madrid to Cadiz, one of the best in Europe; shortly afterwards passed the ruined village of Taracejo, where are the remains of a Moorish castle, and halted about mid-day on the banks of the El monte. Head-quarters at Taracejo.

Marshal Soult is again in Placentia, and his outposts at Coria. Some British soldiers, who were left sick in that city, fell into his hands, but have since made their escape, and arrived at Zarza Major, where marshal Beresford is at present, with the two brigades of infantry, under the command of generals Lightburne, and Catlin Crawford. Sir R. Wilson has retired into Portugal, after a severe action with part of Ney's corps, near the Pass of Banos. The French have their piquets on the right bank of the Tagus, opposite to Almaraz, where general Robert Crawford is stationed with a division in advance. His men bathe in the river, and exchange civilities with the enemy, without receiving the smallest molestation.

Cuesta has thought proper to resign the command of his army, and is succeeded by general d'Eguia.

By the courtesy of marshal Mortier, who commands at Talavera, accounts have been received of the wounded. He has placed sentries over the quarters of the officers and hospitals, to prevent any of their property being pillaged,

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and has advanced money to some out of his own pocket.

On the morning of the 20th August, soon after day-break, the 1st and 4th divisions of the army quitted the valley d'Elmonte, in which they had halted since the 11th instant, and, after a march of four leagues, reached Truxillo, close to which the troops *bivouacked* for the night, and proceeded in a similar manner on their retreat.

Such, finally, were altogether the immediate circumstances which followed the battle of Talavera; the remoter remain to be deduced from the ensuing chapters of the present volume.

CHAP. II.

MILITARY-DIPLOMATIC NEGOTIATION OF MAR-
QUIS WELLESLEY WITH THE SPANISH GO-
VERNMENT.

Arrival of the Marquis Wellesley on a military Mission.—His Excellency's splendid Reception.—Objects discussed and effected.—Examination of the disputed Points, and Recriminations respecting the Supply of the British and Spanish Armies.—Resignation of the Spanish General-in-Chief, Cuesta.

THE best possible view that can be given of this important military negotiation will be afforded by forbearing from any auxiliary remark to the reader, and giving the correspondence in the order in which it took place.

The character of this stage of the war, however, will derive a small light from the very cautious commencement of the negotiation, and no less the ceremonious annunciations of the marquis Wellesley's approach to Spain and the Spanish government.

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Marquis Wel-
lesley to the
right hon. J.
H. Frere.

H. M. S. Donegal, off Cadiz, July 31, 1809.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you of my approach to Cadiz, and of my expectations of being able to land to-morrow morning, and to proceed to Seville in the course of a few days.

I request you to communicate my arrival to the supreme junta in the manner which may appear to you to be most respectful and most proper.

The enclosed packets to your address from Mr. secretary Canning, and from the officer commanding H. M. S. Donegal, have been delivered to my charge.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) WELLESLEY.

P. S.—I request you to forward by the first safe and expeditious conveyance the packet for sir Arthur Wellesley intrusted to the charge of the messenger who carries this despatch.

H. M. S. Donegal, off Cadiz, July 31, 1809.

Sir,

Marquis Wel-
lesley to sir
A. Wellesley.

I have the honour to inform you of my approach to Cadiz, and of my expectation of being able to land to-morrow morning, and to proceed to Seville in the course of a few days, at which place I hope to be favoured with such communications as you may think proper to make to me upon the public service.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) WELLESLEY.

*Deleytosa, Aug. 8, 1809.*BOOK V.
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Sir A. Welles-
ley to marquis
Wellesley.

My Lord,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of a letter, dated the 3d inst, from Mr. Frere; and I shall be very much obliged to your lordship if you will urge don Martin de Garay to adhere to the rule laid down for the government of my communications with the Spanish ministers by his majesty's commands; and upon all future occasions to make known to me the wishes of the Spanish government through the English ambassador. I am aware that it is difficult, if not impossible, to drive the Spaniards from a false assertion or a sophisticated or bad argument; and I consider it of little importance what remains in their own archives, if what they write is confined to them. But, as those who have the honour of serving his majesty are liable to misrepresentations and unfounded calumnies of every description, I am desirous of avoiding to give those, who circulate those calumnies respecting my actions, those grounds for them which they would find in M. de Garay's despatches to me, by requiring that he should adhere to the rule which his majesty has laid down for my government.

I am happy to find that the junta have taken measures to supply the army.

Your lordship will receive my sentiments upon the permanent arrangements to be adopted for this purpose by the courier who will deliver this letter. In the mean time I must inform your excellency,

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Sir A. Wellesley to marquis Wellesley.

that if the government have not already made great exertions to supply us, and if we do not immediately experience the effects of those exertions by receiving a plentiful supply of provisions and forage, we must move away, in as many detachments as there are roads from hence, to the frontiers of Portugal. I assure your excellency, that, since the 3d, the army has had no bread till yesterday, when about 4000 pounds of biscuits were divided among 30,000 mouths. The army will be useless to Spain, and will be entirely lost, if this treatment is to continue; and I must say, that, if any efficient measures for our relief had been adopted by the government when they first received the account of our distresses from the want of provisions, we ought, before now, to have received the benefit of them. There is this day again no bread for the soldiers.

I must, at the same time, do the late British minister the justice to declare, that I do not conceive this deficiency of supplies for the army is at all to be attributed to any neglect or omission of his. *It is to be attributed to the poverty and to the exhausted state of the country; to the inactivity of the magistrates and people; to their disinclination of taking any trouble, excepting that of packing up their property, and removing away when they hear of the approach of the enemy; to their habits of insubordination and disobedience; and to the want of power in the government and their officers.*

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

Means of accounting for the want of supplies to the British army.

Deleytosa, Aug. 8, 1809.

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Sir A. Wellesley to M. de Garay.

Sir,

I have had the honour of receiving the letters which your excellency did me the honour of writing to me on the 30th July, in which you have expressed the approbation of the central junta of the conduct of the British army under my command in the action of the 28th July.

I am very sensible of the approbation of the central junta, and I beg that you will convey to them my respectful acknowledgments.

I am particularly flattered by the confidence they have reposed in me, in appointing me one of the captains-general of the Spanish army; and I have this day written to his majesty's principal secretary of state, to request him to lay before his majesty this testimony of the approbation and confidence of the central junta; and, until his majesty's answer will be received, I shall be happy to render the government any service that may be in my power.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

Deleytosa, Aug. 8, 1809.

Sir,

I have, in a separate letter, expressed my acknowledgments to the government for the honour they have done me in appointing me a captain-general of the Spanish army; and I have now to return them my thanks for the horses which

Sir A. Wellesley to M. de Garay.

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Sir A. Wellesley to M. de Garay.

they have been pleased to present to me, in the name of king Ferdinand VII.

In respect to the pay attached to the rank of captain-general, I hope the government will excuse me if I decline to become a burthen upon the finances of Spain during this contest for her independence.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

Deleytosa, 8th August, 1809.

My Lord,

Lieutenant-general sir Arthur Wellesley to lord viscount Castlereagh.

I apprized your lordship, on the first instant, of the advance of a French corps towards the Puerto de Banos, and of the probable embarrassments to the operations of the army which its arrival at Placentia would occasion ; and these embarrassments having since existed to a degree so considerable as to oblige us to fall back, and to take up a defensive position on the Tagus, I am induced to trouble you more at length with an account of what has passed upon this subject. When I entered Spain I had a communication with general Cuesta, through sir Robert Wilson and colonel Roche, respecting the occupation of the Puerto de Banos and the Puerto de Puales, the former of which, it was last settled, should be held by a corps to be formed under the marquis de la Reyna, to consist of two battalions, one from general Cuesta's army, and two from Bejar, and that the

Puerto de Puales was to be taken care of by the duke del Parque, by detachments from the garrison of Ciudad Rodrigo.

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I doubted of the capacity of the garrison of Ciudad Rodrigo to make the detachment to the latter, but so little of the effectual occupation of the former, that, in writing to marshal Beresford on the 17th of July, I desired him to look to the Puerto de Puales, but that I considered Banos as secure, as appears by the extract of my letter, which I enclose.

Lieutenant-general sir Arthur Wellesley to lord viscount Castle-reagh.

On the 30th intelligence was received at Talavera that 12,000 rations had been ordered, at Fuente Duenas, for the 28th, and 24,000 at Los Santos for the same day, for a French corps which it was believed was on its march towards the Puerto de Banos. General Cuesta expressed some anxiety respecting this post, and sent me a message to propose that sir Robert Wilson should be sent there with his corps. Sir Robert was on that day at Talavera, but his corps was in the mountains towards Escalona; and, as he had already made himself very useful in that quarter, and had been near Madrid, with which city he had had a communication which I was desirous of keeping up, I proposed that a Spanish corps should be sent to Banos without loss of time.

I could not prevail with general Cuesta, although he certainly admitted the necessity of a reinforcement when he proposed that sir Robert should be

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Lieutenant-general, sir Arthur Wellesley to Lord Viscount Castlereagh.

sent to Banos, and he was equally sensible with myself of the benefit to be derived to the cause from sending back sir Robert to Escalona.

At this time we had no further intelligence of the enemy's advance than that the rations were ordered; and I had hopes that the enemy might be deterred from advancing by the intelligence of our success on the 28th, and that the troops in the Puerto might make some defence, and that under these circumstances it was not desirable to direct sir Robert Wilson from Escalona.

On the 31st, however, I renewed my application to general Cuesta, to send there a Spanish division of sufficient strength, in a letter to general O'Donoghue, of which I enclose a copy, but without effect; and he did not detach general Basscourt till the morning of the 2d, after we had heard that the enemy had entered Bejar, and it was obvious that the troops in the Puerto would make no defence.

On the 2d we received accounts that the enemy had entered Placentia in two columns. The marquis de la Reyna, whose two battalions consisted only of 600 men, with only twenty rounds of ammunition each man, retired from the Puerto and from Placentia without firing a shot, and went to the bridge of Almaraz, which he declared he intended to remove. The battalions of Bejar dispersed without making any resistance. The general called upon me that day, and proposed that

half of the army should march to the rear, to oppose the enemy, while the other half should maintain the post at Talavera.

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My answer was, that if by half the army he meant half of each army, I would only answer, that I was ready either to go or stay with the whole British army, but that I could not separate it. He then desired me to choose whether I would go or stay, and I preferred to go, from thinking that the British troops were most likely to do the business effectually, and without contest, and from being of opinion that to open a communication through Placentia was more important to us than to the Spanish army, although very important to them. With this decision general Cuesta appeared perfectly satisfied.

Lieutenant-general sir Arthur Wellesley to lord viscount Castle-
reagh.

The movements of the enemy in our front, since the 1st, had induced me to be of opinion, that, despairing of forcing us at Talavera, they intended to force a passage by Escalona, and thus to open a communication with the French corps coming from Placentia.

This suspicion was confirmed, on the night of the 2d, by letters received from sir Robert Wilson, of which I enclose copies; and before I quitted Talavera, on the 3d, I waited upon general O'Donoghue, and conversed with him upon the whole of our situation; and pointed out to him the possibility, that, in the case of the enemy coming through Escalona, general Cuesta might find himself obliged

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Lieutenant-general sir Arthur Wellesley to lord viscount Castle-reeagh.

to quit Talavera before I could be able to return to him; and I urged him to collect all the carts that could be got, in order to remove our hospital. At his desire I got the purport of this conversation in writing, and sent him a letter to be laid before general Cuesta, of which I enclose a copy.

The British army marched on the 3d to Oropesa, general Bassecourt's Spanish corps being at Centinello, where I desired it might halt the next day, in order that I might be nearer it.

About five o'clock in the evening I heard that the French had arrived from Placentia at Naval Moral, whereby they were between us and the bridge of Almaraz.

About an hour afterwards I received from general O'Donoghue the letter and its enclosure, of which I enclose copies, announcing to me the intention of general Cuesta to march from Talavera in the evening, and to leave there my hospital, excepting such men as could be moved by the means he already had, on the ground of his apprehension that I was not strong enough for the corps coming from Placentia, and that the enemy was moving upon his flank, and had returned to Santa Olalla in his front. I acknowledge that these reasons did not appear to me sufficient for giving up so important a post as Talavera, for exposing the combined armies to an attack front and rear at the same time, and for abandoning my hospital; and I wrote the letter of which I enclose a copy.

This, unfortunately, reached the general after he had marched, and he arrived at Oropesa shortly after day-light on the morning of the 4th.

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Lieutenant-general sir Arthur Wellesley to lord viscount Castlereagh.

The question, what was to be done? was then to be considered. The enemy, stated to be 30,000 strong, but, at all events, consisting of the corps of Soult and Ney, either united or not very distant from each other, and, supported by marshal Jourdan and Joseph Buonaparte, certainly sufficiently strong to attack the British army, only considered at 25,000, were, on one side, in possession of the high road to the passage of the Tagus at Almaraz, the bridge at which place we know had been removed, although the boats still necessarily remained in the river.

On the other side, we had reason to expect the advance of Victor's corps to Talavera as soon as general Cuesta's march should be known, and, after leaving 12,000 men to watch Venegas, and allowing from 10 to 12,000 killed and wounded in the late action, this corps would have amounted to 25,000. We could extricate ourselves from this difficult situation only by great celerity of movement, to which the troops were unequal, as they had not had their allowance of provisions for several days, and by success in two battles; if unsuccessful in either, we should have been without a retreat; and if Soult and Ney, avoiding an action, had retired before us, and had waited the arrival of Victor, we

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Lieutenant-general sir Arthur Wellesley to lord viscount Castle-
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should have been exposed to a general action with 50,000 men, equally without a retreat.

We had reason to expect, that, as the marquis de la Reyna could not remove the boats from the river at Almaraz, Soult would have destroyed them. Our only retreat was, therefore, by the bridge of Arzobispo; and, if we had moved on, the enemy, by breaking that bridge while the army should be engaged with Soult and Ney, would have deprived us of that only resource.

We could not take a position at Oropesa, as we thereby left open the road to the bridge of Arzobispo, from Talavera by Calera; and, after considering the whole subject maturely, I was of opinion that it was advisable to retire to the bridge of Arzobispo, and to take up a defensive position upon the Tagus. I was induced to adopt this last opinion because the French have now at least 50,000 men disposable to oppose to the combined armies, and a corps of 12,000 to watch Venegas; and I was likewise of opinion, that, the sooner the defensive line should be taken up, the more likely were the troops to be able to defend it.

Accordingly I marched on the 4th, and crossed the Tagus by the bridge of Arzobispo, and have continued my route to this place, in which I am well situated to defend the passage of Almaraz and the lower parts of the Tagus. General Cuesta crossed the river on the night of the 5th, and he is still at the bridge of Arzobispo.

About 2000 of the wounded have been brought away from Talavera, the remaining 1500 are there; and I doubt whether, under any circumstances, it would have been possible or consistent with humanity to attempt to move any more of them. From the treatment which some of the soldiers wounded on the 27th, and who fell into the hands of the enemy, experienced from them, and from the manner in which I have always treated the wounded who have fallen into my hands, I expect that these men will be well treated; and I have only to lament that a new concurrence of events, over which, from circumstances, I had, and could have, no control, should have placed the army in a situation to be obliged to leave any of them behind.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

Deleytosa, Aug. 8, 1809.

My Lord,

I have received your excellency's letter of the 31st from Cadiz. I conclude that Mr. Frere will make your excellency acquainted with the general situation of affairs in Spain; and I have the honour to enclose a copy of my despatch of this date to the secretary of state, which will make you acquainted with the circumstances which have rendered it necessary for the armies to take

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Lieutenant-general sir Arthur Wellesley to lord viscount Castlereagh.

Sir A. Wellesley to the marquis Wellesley.

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Sir A. Wellesley to the marquis Wellesley.

up a defensive position behind the Tagus. I have already apprized Mr. Frere, in a private letter, of my opinion that it would be necessary to put in motion the marquis de Romana's or the duque del Parque's force in the north of Spain, to induce the enemy to weaken his force in Estremadura, before the armies could resume offensive operations.

In the mean time it is necessary that many arrangements should be adopted, to enable the troops to take advantage of any success they may have in an offensive operation, or even to maintain their defensive positions.

I will endeavour to detail them in this despatch, with my reasons for thinking them absolutely necessary.

Plan for provisioning the British army at this crisis.

The first of these is the formation of magazines of provisions and forage, particularly biscuit, barley, and cattle, at reasonable distances in the rear of the armies. This part of Spain is but thinly inhabited, and but ill cultivated, in proportion to its extent and its fertility, and it is nearly exhausted.

As now equipped, the armies, amounting to not less than 60,000 mouths, and 16 or 18,000 horses, depend entirely for their daily supply of provisions upon the country, which does not contain a population in an extent of many square miles equal to the numbers of the army, and of course cannot produce a sufficiency for its sustenance. It is necessary, therefore, to send to great distances for

supplies, which are produced with difficulty; the troops are ill fed, and not regularly, and very frequently receive no food at all.

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The next arrangement to be made is to supply the armies with means of transport; not only to move forward the magazines, when that may be necessary, which means should be especially attached to the magazines, but also means of transport to enable the army to communicate with the magazines, or to send to any part of the country for supplies of provisions or forage: 3 or 4000 mules would effectually answer the first object; and I should consider the British army well supplied with what it would require, if it had 15,000 mules, and about 100 of the Valencian or Catalonian mule-carts.

These measures are equally necessary for the Spanish and the British armies. No troops can serve to any good purpose unless they are regularly fed; and it is an error to suppose that a Spaniard, or that a man or animal of any country, can make an exertion without food. In fact, the Spanish troops are more clamorous for their food, and more exhausted if they do not receive it regularly, than our own are.

The other points to which I wish to draw your attention are referable to the state of the Spanish troops.

My opinion is, that an exertion ought to be made

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Sir A. Welles-
ley to the mar-
quis Wellesley.

immediately to clothe them in the national uniform. By the adoption of this measure, the practice which prevails, I am sorry to say, very generally, of throwing away their arms and accoutrements, and running away, and pretending to be peasants, must be discontinued. Large bodies could not change their clothing or their distinctive marks of dress in a soldier; and it is probable, that, as they would not only find no security, but rather increase their danger, by throwing away their arms and accoutrements in their flight, the state would not so frequently sustain the loss of these valuable articles.

Another advantage which would result from the more general use of the national uniform is, that it would be in the power of the general to punish the troops who misbehaved before the enemy in the manner most likely to affect the feelings of the Spaniards, viz. by disgrace.

When a number of peasants are collected together, with arms in their hands, and in the garb of peasants, it is difficult to fix a mark upon those corps or individuals who have behaved ill, which shall point them out as objects of execration to the whole community; and yet it is acknowledged that a punishment of this description would have ten times the effect of that which has lately been carried into execution in the Spanish army, on account of the misbehaviour of some corps in the

battle of Talavera, viz. that of putting to death every tenth man of the number who ran away, and a third or fourth of the officers.

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If the whole army wore the national uniform, it would be possible to disgrace those who should misbehave, either by depriving them of it, or by affixing some mark to it which should tend more effectually than any thing else to prevent a repetition of these misfortunes.

See A. Wellesley to the marquis Wellesley

It is difficult to describe to your lordship the extent to which this practice prevails.

Whole corps, officers and all, run off upon the first appearance of danger; and I doubt not that, if the truth could be ascertained, the army of general Cuesta, which crossed the Tagus 36 or 38,000 strong, does not now consist of 30,000, although it has not lost 500 men in action. The plan of operations which I should recommend for the Spanish nation is one generally of defence.

They should avoid general actions, but should take advantage of the strong points in their country to defend themselves and to harass the enemy. Their principal army should be collected on the Tagus, if they can hold that river; or farther back, if they cannot; and whenever they can form a body of troops, or the guerillas of the country can be put in motion, they should be employed upon the enemy's communications, and should be pushed on even to Madrid.

How to render the Spanish armies efficient at this crisis.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY

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Col. Roche to
sir A. Welles-
ley.

Sir,

La Pualeda de Garbin, Aug. 8, 1809.

An express has this moment reached this place from the Puente de Arzobispo, stating that the enemy's cavalry had passed the Tagus, at the ford of ———, (in what number is not stated,) and that he had established such a powerful battery against the Spanish one on this side, as led them to suppose the possession of the bridge would be maintained. The report was only a verbal one, and the general himself, who examined the informant, did not detain him long; and, from this loose information, every thing here is in motion, and the head-quarters and troops at this place have moved off to La Mesa d'Ibor.

I am sorry to state that the duke of Albuquerque's cavalry was found so unprepared that they could not form, and fell back upon the infantry. Basse-court has asked for support, and all appears here confusion.

We probably shall hear more certainly to-night the state of things, and I shall write again.

Seville, Aug. 8, 1809.

My Lord,

Mr. Frere to
the marquis
Wellesley.

The three parties which had been detained have arrived. It appears that the delay arose solely from the ignorance of the persons employed, who were not used to that service, and who were overtaken by a courier of the cabinet,

who was the bearer of the last, and took charge of the others.

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August.Mr. Freere to
the marquis
Wellesley.

I enclose copies of all these, and a note of the answer to Cuesta. I confess I do not understand his motive for following sir Arthur Wellesley, as the point upon which the success of the whole operation depended, namely, the disguising from Victor the movement of the British army, is rendered doubtful; and his march leaves Venegas, if possible, more exposed than before. The inference deduced from the intercepted letter (of which he has not forwarded a copy) does not appear an obvious or necessary one; on the contrary, it would seem as if the writer was already aware that Soult was not, at that time, advancing with a force equal to encounter that which is there assigned to the English; and it seems that the order, if it is one, is not for him to attack the English alone, but, in concert with general Victor, to make an attempt on the combined army.

My suspicion may be an injurious one, but I cannot help imagining that the consideration of his own exposed situation (which might, I should conceive, have been better remedied by a movement of the army of Venegas, which would, at the same time, have provided for the security of both) was, in fact, the real motive for following sir Arthur Wellesley's army with that under his command. The worst is, that our sick and wounded must be left, I apprehend, at the mercy of chance: the

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August.Mr. Frere to
the marquis
Welllesley.

chance, whatever it may be, of the enemy's discovering Cuesta's change of position. Sir Arthur writes me word that 5 or 600 pair of sheets, and as many shirts, are wanted for the hospital, and desires me to send forward immediately the greatest number possible from Seville. I shall do my utmost, but perhaps something in this way may be done at Cadiz.

I transmit two letters, one of the 31st July, and the other of the 1st of this month, from Cuesta to Venegas, exhorting him to march upon Madrid, reckoning upon the assistance of the British as well as the Spanish army for a forward movement in pursuit of Victor, in case he should attempt to oppose the occupation of the capital by general Venegas.

The opinion of the utility of a movement upon Madrid is repeated in the second letter, though the enemy had then retreated to Torrijos and towards Toledo; and the news arrived of the appearance of the French at Bejar, which, general Cuesta says, will make the combined army cautious in pursuing the enemy. Venegas, in his letter, points out the difficulties which must attend the enterprise proposed to him, considering the new situation of the enemy's force: and he insinuates that he shall probably remain in his present situation, in expectation of fresh orders. He, at the same time, marks the absolute necessity of a simultaneous movement by the combined army and that under

his command. The letter of Venegas to the minister at war, which accompanied these, I have not at hand, and it is not worth while to detain the courier for a copy of it. It merely regrets the opportunity he had lost by marching immediately upon Madrid, by an over-scrupulous attention to his orders; and complaining of the situation in which general Cuesta was likely to have compromised him, by dissembling the incapacity of the British army to advance.

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August.Mr. Frere to
the marquis
Wellesley.

I send, likewise, another from Venegas, written upon receiving the news of general Cuesta's having abandoned Talavera, in which he states that he prefers the chance of maintaining himself, at all risks, in his present situation, to the other alternative of a retreat, which would dispirit his army. This, at present, is in an excellent state, as I hear from a confidential person whom I had sent forward to give me intelligence of the state of things at Madrid, and the occurrences there, in case of the Spanish army finding their way into that capital; and whose activity and good sense may, I hope, prove serviceable to your mission.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) J. H. FRERE.

Seville, Aug. 10, 1809.

Sir,

I am not aware that I can give you a more exact account of the state of things here than

Right hon. J.
H. Frere to
Mr. secretary
Canning.

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Right hon. J.
H. Frere to
Mr. secretary
Canning.

by forwarding the two enclosed reports, which I thought it my duty to make to the marquis of Wellesley, in date of yesterday and the day before. A letter from sir Arthur Wellesley to the marquis, dated the 8th, which I received this evening, and have forwarded it by a messenger who was just then setting out, gives me the satisfaction of finding that I was right in the conjecture upon which I founded my note to M. Garay, and upon which I thought it advisable to demand general Cuesta's dismissal. That I should have ventured such a step upon a conjecture, especially with my successor, in a manner, at the door, may perhaps appear rash and improper, and at least requires some explanation. My motives for it were, in the first place, those which are stated in my letter to M. Garay, namely, my apprehensions that the reports of the intended retreat of our army to Portugal might be well founded, and the importance, in that case, of procuring instantly a satisfaction to sir Arthur Wellesley for the abandonment of his wounded at Talavera; and, secondly, the necessity of profiting of the agitation and alarm excited by the apprehension of the withdrawing of the auxiliary army, and which the next courier might dissipate, as I believe has actually been the case in the course of the day; but not till after a decision had been taken, last night, unfavourable to general Cuesta.

It is generally understood that he will receive a

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Right hon. J.
H. Frere to
Mr. secretary
Canning.

hint to retire (and his partisans are complaining of it); but I cannot speak with absolute certainty, not having seen M. Garay in the course of the day. As I received this morning a letter from sir Arthur Wellesley, dated the 4th, in which he did not mention any particular disparagement between him and general Cuesta, even on the point upon which I had most insisted in my note; consequently I did not venture to expose myself to questions upon the subject of what his courier had brought me; and though I received, to-night, the above-mentioned despatches, directed from him to the marquis of Wellesley, which satisfied me as to the justice of my view of the subject, it was then too late to have a conference with M. Garay. I shall, however, send off the courier even with this uncertainty, as I am in hopes he may be able to avail himself of the packet which carries sir Arthur Wellesley's despatches, and I am apprehensive of being entirely occupied to-morrow, in consequence of lord Wellesley's arrival. We have besides the Malta packet, which is detained in Cadiz for a few days, to give the marquis of Wellesley an opportunity of writing, and another is daily expected from England.

In addition to my other motives above mentioned, it appears to me hardly fair to the marquis of Wellesley to leave him to begin his mission with an altercation in which his brother was concerned.

I am aware that the part and the tone which I have taken may alter the feelings with which I

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Right hon. J.
H. Freere to
Mr. secretary
Canning.

should have wished to have taken my leave of my friends in this country. Upon this, however, as upon all former occasions, I trust I shall never regret having acted according to my ideas of public duty, especially if justified by the event. I understand that the junta are occupied to-night in fixing upon the choice of a new general; and I have sent a private note to M. Garay, deprecating the appointment of general Eguia, whom, as one of the old school, the junta militaire would be most likely to recommend. He is a man of considerable knowledge with respect to the geography of the country in a military view, but without character or decision, and consequently very inadequate to such a situation as that of a chief command under such circumstances. He had been looked upon as an useful assistant to general Cuesta, but never had any kind of influence with him, and completed the destruction of the army at Medillen solely because he did not venture to vary his orders without receiving fresh ones from general Cuesta, who was, at that time, in a situation which made it impossible for them to communicate.

General Cuesta having since forwarded the intercepted letters, which he mentions in his letter of the 3d as having determined him to follow the English army towards Placentia, I am enabled to transmit copies of them. I likewise enclose the translation of a diary of the army of Estramadura, which gives an interesting description of the feelings

excited in the army by the late proceedings of general Cuesta.

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August.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) J. H. FRERE.

Deleytosa, Aug. 9, 1809.

Dear Sir,

I arrived here this morning; the whole army has passed over the worst part of the road. One division is at Mesa d'Ibor, but all the artillery is by this time at Campillas; the advanced guard upon the Tagus, opposite Almaroz. I have sent an engineer to look at that river, to examine and settle what different defences it will require, which I will have constructed forthwith, and I will re-place the bridge. I shall want some Spanish artillery of heavy calibre, however, to arm these batteries; and for this, as well as for other reasons, I would recommend to general Cuesta to take early measures to send the greater part, if not the whole, of his heavy artillery, through the mountains, as soon as he can, as well as his Valencian and Catalonian carts, which travel through these mountains, with great difficulty, and can be of no use to him where he is.

I will this day, if I can get it copied, or to-morrow, send you a report of the Tagus, from the bridge of Talavera to that of Almaraz, from which you will see an account of the Bascas mill-dams and Piods. It will appear from this report that the

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Sir A. Wellesley
to general
O'Donoghue.

enemy would not find it difficult to throw over the river some light infantry between you and us, which we might find inconvenient in the interception of our communication, if in nothing else.

I, therefore, recommend to you to have a division of infantry at Mesa d'Ibor, if only with the object of keeping up the communication between the two armies; but I have also observed that this is a very strong post indeed, and, in case of any accidents upon the right, it would effectually secure your retreat.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

Seville, Aug. 9, 1809.

Sir,

M. de Garay to
M. Frere.

The supreme junta being informed of the contents of your note, which you were pleased to transmit to me under date of this day, relative to the abandonment by general Cuesta of the 4000 wounded English at Talavera, and anxious to reconcile, on this unfortunate occasion, their desire of acting with the greatest harmony towards the British nation with the necessity and expediency of respecting the public opinion, which is in favour of the Spanish general, have agreed to hear what may have been *the motives which influenced him in this proceeding*, by which these unfortunate and brave warriors have been thus abandoned.

The short time necessary to receive this answer

will not delay considerably the resolution to be taken in consequence; and, if general Cuesta should give in his resignation as quickly as you indicate in your note, you need not doubt that the junta will instantly admit it, and will name in his place a person who shall in every respect merit the confidence of the nation, and of general Wellesley.

(Signed)

M. DE GARAY.

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M. de Garay to
Mr. Frere.

Deleytosa, Aug. 9, 1809.

My Lord,

I had not received any communication from general Cuesta since the morning of the 6th, (when I saw general O'Donoghue at Peralela de Garbin,) where I received this morning from lieutenant-colonel Roche a letter, of which the enclosed is a copy.

Sir A. Wellesley to marquis Wellesley.

I did not know that general Cuesta had moved his head-quarters from the bridge of Arzabispo; much less that any disaster had happened to his troops, even to the limited extent stated by colonel Roche.

About three o'clock this day, however, the duke of Albuquerque arrived here, and informed me that the French cavalry had surprised the Spanish outposts at the bridge of Arzobispo, by crossing the river at a fort immediately above the bridge, yesterday, at half-past one; that the Spanish troops had given way; and that the French had possession

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Sir A. Welles-
ley to marquis
Wellesley.

of the bridge, of the cannon destined for its defence, and of five pieces belonging to the duke's division, which were left behind. The duke of Albuquerque states his belief that the French were at Perales de Garbin this morning, where your excellency will observe that general Cuesta's headquarters were yesterday afternoon. General Cuesta has since sent me a message by one of his aid-de-camps, and to colonel Roche, from whom I understand that the general had, to the moment of their departure from Mesa d'Ibor, ten o'clock in the morning, brought none of his artillery or of his carriages across the Ibor.

On this side of that river there is a high mountain, up which it is impossible to draw artillery, except by the assistance of men; and it is obvious that unless the general had saved Perales, and the position between the Ibor and that village, the Spaniards must lose their artillery, although they may hold the position of the Mesa d'Ibor.

I enclose your excellency the copy of a letter which I wrote to general O'Donoghue on the 7th, and of another which I have just despatched to him; but I acknowledge that I am apprehensive that the Spanish army will lose, or rather has lost, its artillery before this time. I can do nothing to assist them; and, indeed, in any case, it would have been impossible for me to do anything for their assistance, excepting by persuading

general Cuesta to adopt early measures to pass his heavy artillery over the Ibor.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

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Seville, Aug. 9th, 1809.

My Lord,

Since I had the honour of writing to you, yesterday, I have received the particulars relative to the retreat of the two armies to the bridge of Arzobispo, of which the intelligence was just received, and to which I alluded at the end of my private letter, and which I now enclose, together with that of to-day. By this it appears that sir A. Wellesley had taken his march in a direction for Portugal; but (as general Cuesta says) had been prevailed upon by general O'Donoghue and lord Mac Duff to remain for the defence of the bridge of Almaraz.

Mr. Frere to
the marquis
Wellesley.

It is hardly possible from general Cuesta's letter, except that the facts which he is obliged to communicate necessarily imply it, and that such a result was to be expected as the necessary consequence of the unaccountable resolution taken by general Cuesta to abandon his post at Talavera, and to run after the British army without waiting to know whether his assistance was wanted; but for this, I say, there is nothing in Cuesta's letter from which any disagreement or difference of opinion between him and sir A. Wellesley could pos-

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Mr. Frere to
the marquis
Wellesley.

sibly be inferred ; and accordingly I by no means trust to the account which he gives of the result of general O'Donoghue's conference. Under this impression, and convinced that there was not an instant to be lost, I wrote the enclosed letter to M. de Garay ; it is in Spanish, for I did not think it regular to enter upon so important a subject in the usual official form, considering that you were expected here the day after to-morrow ; and I did not wish to lay myself open (as I might have done by a more official mode of representation) to an answer, referring the subject to their future communications with you. Besides, independent of all other considerations, there was, some days ago, so great a reluctance with regard to the removal of general Cuesta, that I thought it advisable not to allow the effect of the intelligence which had just been received to wear away.

I do not know whether I am correct in the cause which I assign to the disagreement which evidently exists ; but I have no report from sir A. Wellesley ; and, in the mean time, it is necessary to take the most popular ground, as the government and all the persons in employment are using their utmost endeavours with the people to persuade them that the fault must lie with us, and not the general employed, or, in other words, with themselves.

I am unable to account for the dates of general Cuesta's letters, 4th and 6th, as there has been only the interval of one day between their ar-

rival from the same point. I send likewise two *partes* from general Venegas, giving an account of his van guard having been attacked at Aranjuez, and giving a very satisfactory report of their conduct on that occasion. In the other he states, that, in the action of the day before, he had lost 220 between killed and wounded, and that of the enemy had been much greater.

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Mr. Frere to
the marquis
Wellesley.

This action was distinguished by a particular trait of a young officer of artillery, the only son of the marquis of Panco, who, finding himself mortally wounded, called his company round him, and harangued them, with this conclusion: "No abandonen estos canones, hasta morir y voy á ello lleno de gloria."

Courage of a
young Spanish
officer.

The enemy remained behind the Tagus and Xarama, and had desisted from their attack.

General Venegas's army is disposed in echellons at Aranjuez, Ocana, La Guardia, and Tembleque, from which last place he writes. In his present position he is exposed to be cut off by a combined movement of the enemy upon Aranjuez and from Toledo, and must of necessity retire from it.

The military junta are of opinion that nothing is to be done but for the army to retreat immediately to Des-pena Perros. It seems to me that it would be sufficient for him to withdraw out of the reach of this operation; and that in case of the enemy's turning upon him with superior forces, so as to make La Mancha untenable, he might occupy the points

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Mr. Frere to
the marquis
Wellesley.

of Des-pena Perros with a part of his army, (for it is not to be imagined that, in the present state of things, they will make a serious push into Andalusia on that side,) and march with or detach the rest upon the enemy's left, through a country which they have never been able to occupy, Cuenca, Molina, and even as far as Arragon, where such a reinforcement would decidedly incline the balance in our favour, and immediately threaten their communication with France, as a less advanced movement to either of the other two points would the capital.

It appears to me that it is our decided interest, having the country in our favour, and with the present imperfect system of military subsistence and discipline, to have as many small armies as possible, and to present diversions such as these, which the enemy cannot excuse himself from attending to.

I have spoken to one of the leading members of the section of war, the marquis Campo Lagrado, upon this subject, yesterday; and was thinking to put my reflections in the form of a note; but as you are expected here so shortly, and as general Venegas is not likely to retire immediately (for he appears very confident in the spirit of his army, and more disposed to risk a battle), I have thought it right to wait your arrival.

I enclose two *partes* from the duke del Parque, at Ciudad Rodrigo, both dated the 3d; in the one

he states that marshal Beresford appeared to confine himself to the line of the Agueda (which he apprehends indicates a disposition to confine himself to the defence of Portugal), instead of a position from which he might have extended his operations to the Sierra de Francia.

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August.
Mr. Frere to
the marquis
Wellesley.

He mentions the steps which he had taken to induce general Beresford to act, or detach, in this direction; and transmits a letter which he had written with this view, pointing out the advantage which he hoped to derive from sending a battalion of marksmen to act in the Sierra.

The second letter encloses an abstract of intelligence from various points in the neighbourhood, from which it results that Mortier's division is acting in concert with that of Soult.

It is difficult to form any conclusion as to the direction which Ney has taken; it is singular that the last informant, who mentions their evacuating Salamanca, does not say any thing of it. It appears that they had made inquiries about the road to Placentia.

The report of the day before, from the same place, says that they were going to Valladolid, which agrees better with the circumstances of their being accompanied by the Spaniards, who had embraced that party.

The 6000 shirts and 2,600 sheets were to set out to-day; I am afraid to little purpose.

Since closing this letter, I have received an an-

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swer from M. Garay upon the subject of my note of this morning, which I enclose.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) J. H. FRERE.

Seville, Aug. 9, 1809,

Sir,

Mr. Frere to
M. de Garay.

Although I should, perhaps, have some scruples in taking any official step in a subject of so great importance, my successor being already at Cadiz, and expected here the day after to-morrow; yet it appears to me so important that no time should be lost in the resolution which I have to submit to your excellency; there is neither time for reference to the marquis Wellesley, nor to wait his answer, and still less his arrival here.

General Cuesta has abandoned 4000 English at Talavera, wounded in the service of Spain, and victims of his obstinacy, he having deserted, as appears from his own reports, the posts which he occupied in concert with the British general, and withdrawn even his advanced parties under the command of the duke of Albuquerque, which had been pushed on to six leagues beyond Talavera, without having met an enemy. This step does not appear to have been taken in concert with, or communicated to, the English general, although he was at a very short distance off, and might, consequently, if he had thought it necessary, have availed himself of the junction of the two armies.

by a momentary halt, to wait the arrival of general Cuesta. My private letters state that sir A. Wellesley has taken the direction of Portugal, with a determination not to return to Spain. I am confirmed in this opinion from not having received any letter from him since the 2d; a silence which I can account for in no other way than by supposing him to have taken the above resolution, and, consequently, to have considered any further communication with me unnecessary.

I pay very little attention to the report of general Cuesta, in which he says, that, through the medium of general O'Donoghue and lord Mac Duff, he had persuaded sir Arthur to remain at the bridge of Almaraz, as, by comparing his report with the latter general's, I have almost always found that they disagreed in the accounts of their plans and combinations, as your excellency will see better by the annexed comparison of them, extracted from my last despatch to my court. I trust your excellency will examine it with attention, after which you will be able to judge what hopes there are of two persons, whose reports, as to facts themselves, are so widely different, ever acting in concert together.

The same might be said of general Venegas, exposed, as he was, to be sacrificed, merely because general Cuesta persisted in concealing from him, as well as from his government, the true state of the combined army, and the inability of the British to make any forward movement.

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Mr. Frere to
M. de Garay.

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August.

Mr. Frere to
M. de Garay.

The dismissal of general Cuesta cannot long be delayed. What is important to the salvation of Spain is, that it should take place instantly; that another commander-in-chief should be named, either leaving the choice to sir A. Wellesley or the junta itself, appointing the duke of Albuquerque, a man of tried ability, and possessed of the confidence of the army, and of general Wellesley.

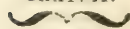
It is, above all, important that no time should be lost, in order that I may be enabled to send off a messenger to sir A. Wellesley, giving him the only satisfaction which the circumstances will admit of, as well for himself as for his army. But, believe me, your excellency, all will be but little; that the wound is very deep; and that the English nation could not have received one more difficult to heal than this abandonment of their countrymen in Talavera.

I request your excellency to take measures for the assembling of the junta without a moment's delay, in order to deliberate and determine upon a matter of such urgency, and that you will make such use of this letter as you may judge expedient.

I have the honour, &c.

(Signed) J. H. FRERE.

While these diplomatic exertions were made by the British minister, the commander-in-chief thus seconded them in a military point of view:—

*Deleytosa, Aug. 9, 1809.*BOOK V.
CHAP. II.1809.
August.Sir A. Welles-
ley to general
O'Donoghue.

Dear Sir,

I had learnt casually, from the duke of Albuquerque, the nature of the affairs of yesterday at the bridge of Arzobispo, and the extent of the loss of the Spanish army, when general Cuesta's aide-du-camp and colonel Roche arrived here. You should, without loss of time, reinforce Peralade de Garbin, if you still hold that village: if you do not, you should, at all events, reinforce the heights on the left of the rocky rivulet on this side of Peralade, which ought to be held by the Spanish army during this night and to-morrow, at all events.

You should then post a strong reserve upon the heights of Mesa d'Ibor, and employ men on the heights in drawing up by hand your artillery in the course of this night. My artillery can all be drawn up in one night in this manner.

If you do not adopt these measures, and if your men omit to do their duty, your artillery will certainly be lost.

You should occupy Tesnedos and Paraledor St. Vincenti, and the passages on the left of Mesa d'Ibor, towards the Tagus.

I wish that I could do any thing for you; but, if my troops were to quit the defile, they would only make matters worse.

If I was informed of general Cuesta's intentions, I would attack the enemy at Paraledor, if he is

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Sir A. Welles-
ley to general
O'Donoghue.

there, with a part of the infantry, while the remainder should be employed in helping up the artillery, rather than lose it.

A thousand men would be sufficient to draw up the artillery and carriages ; but you must know your troops better than I do, and, at all events, I am certain that, by occupying and defending the posts which I have pointed out, your artillery and all must be saved.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

Painful discus-
sion between
the allies.

Gen. Cuesta to
sir A. Welles-
ley.

Campo de la Mesa d'Ibor, Aug. 10, 1809.

Sir,

Continual are the complaints which I hear, and the traces which I see, that the troops of the British army plunder and rob all the places through which they pass ; and even go to the mountains in search of the unfortunate peasants who take refuge in them, for the purpose of stripping them even to the shirt. The army under my command is in want of the most necessary food, because all that I may order for its use is intercepted by the British troops and their commissaries.

The enclosed information, and many others I possess, confirm it. The English soldier sells biscuits and flesh, and the Spanish soldier does not taste it ; and it is five days since he has been provided with rations.

I place these facts under the consideration of your excellency, in order that you may be pleased to have the goodness to apply the suitable remedies.

(Signed) GREG. DE LA CUESTA.

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Deleytosa, Aug. 10, 1809.

My Lord,

I have been this day to general Cuesta's head-quarters at the Mesa d'Ibor.

Sir A. Wellesley to marquis Wellesley.

The whole of his artillery, &c. all his wheel-carriages, had crossed the Ibor, and about one half of the whole of each appeared to me to have been brought up the mountain on this side of the Ibor at twelve o'clock. The enemy's light troops were in Pualeda de Gavin; those of general Cuesta in Bohonal. The enemy have made no movement since yesterday morning.

The general complained of his distress for provisions, which, indeed, is equally felt by all the troops. The horses of the British cavalry and artillery suffer much from the want of barley. We have lost many hundred of the former, and above two hundred of the latter, by the use of other grains, not having been able to procure barley (the only wholesome food for horses in this country) for the horses of the British cavalry and artillery, notwithstanding that the Spanish cavalry have been plentifully supplied. I have also to mention to your excellency, just to point out the description of assistance which is given to us in this country,

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Sir A. Welles-
to marquis
Wellesley.

that, having applied for a remount for the cavalry of only one hundred mares (which cannot be used by the Spanish cavalry, as they ride stallions), I have not got one, or even an answer from government upon the subject; and having asked general Cuesta, after the battle of Talavera, to assist me with 90 mules to draw the British artillery, in lieu of those lost in the action, he refused to give me any, notwithstanding there were hundreds in his army employed in drawing carts containing nothing. The consequence is, that I shall now be obliged to send back to Portugal one, if not two, brigades of artillery, drawn by bullocks, if I should be able to procure those animals; if I should not, I must destroy them.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

P. S.—In stating to your excellency the wants of the army, of draft for the artillery, and the means adopted to supply them, I beg to observe that I have endeavoured to purchase both horses and mules, but I cannot procure them in sufficient numbers. I also wish to draw your excellency's notice to the fact, that general Cuesta has, within these two days, lost eleven (and, if I am rightly informed, seventy) pieces of artillery, the mules and horses attached to which were not lost, for the duke of Albuquerque offered to make over to me the mules attached to five pieces which he had lost, but general Cuesta has taken them.

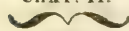
*Seville, Aug. 10, 1809.*BOOK V.
CHAP. II.1809.
August.J. H. Frere to
Mr. secretary
Canning.

Sir,

Whilst I was concluding my last despatch I received the enclosed note from M. de Garay, in which he informs me that the junta militaire are of opinion that the reasons which general Cuesta has given against a retreat behind the bridge of Arzobispo (after the reunion of the two armies in consequence of that general's having abandoned his position at Talavera) appear to them so convincing, that he is commissioned to inquire of me whether I am informed of any other motives which sir A. Wellesley could have for having persevered in his decision to retreat. I only thought it necessary to return an answer (in Spanish, and in a private form) stating that they would (I did not doubt) receive a satisfactory and official one from lord Wellesley, whose arrival was to be expected within a few hours, and to whom sir A. Wellesley had communicated his motives in a letter which I had just forwarded him; but I could not help remarking to him, that one argument against the resolution to retreat, founded on general Cuesta's opinion of the great inferiority of Soult's force, which, on this last occasion, he supposed to amount only to the number of 10 or 12,000 men, appears to be in direct contradiction to the reports received from Ciudad Rodrigo, and to the motives upon which general Cuesta had justified his determination to remove from Talavera.

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I enclose a translation of M. de Garay's note, and



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my answer.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed)

J. H. FRERE.

Spanish view
of sir A. Wel-
lesley's plan.

Seville, Aug. 10, 1809.

Sir,

M. de Garay
to Mr. Frere.

The supreme central junta has learnt with the greatest grief and surprise, by the despatch from general Cuesta of the 4th inst., the determination of sir A. Wellesley, general and chief of the British army, not to attack the French, alleging his suspicions that they had a larger force than that stated by private account; that he would not enter into action without being certain of his retreat; and that, in effect, he proposed to march with his army to the bridge of Arzobispo, to take up a position on this side; that as Cuesta had represented to him, that, according to all the statements that had been received, Soult had not above 10 or 12,000 men, with 7 pieces of artillery, so much precaution was not necessary; and that the two allied armies united might destroy him without great difficulty; and that for them both to retire to the bridge of Arzobispo was leaving the road open by Talavera for Soult to reinforce Victor, which junction might be very detrimental to us. These and other reasons he alleged were fruitless: general Wellesley having already formed his resolution, obliging him either to

follow or to combat Soult singly with his flank unprotected, rendered the result obvious.

The section for the war department and the military junta having weighed the arguments with which general Cuesta endeavoured to convince general Wellesley not to abandon the attack on Soult, which it was his intention to make when he departed from the Spanish army, have found them well grounded, for which reason the surprise and consternation caused by this measure in his majesty's mind have been greatly increased in seeing that general determined not to abandon his resolution, so prejudicial under the existing circumstances, as the result of the victory of Talavera is consequently rendered fruitless, after the many sacrifices which were made to obtain it. His majesty, therefore, fears there must be some other motive which has actuated the general in the above-mentioned determination; and has ordered me to express this to you, sir, that you may be pleased to acquaint me with it, as also whether we may reckon upon the co-operation of the English army in our future operations, that I may make the same known to his majesty, that the necessary measures may be taken in the critical situation in which we are placed, occasioned by this unexpected measure. I avail myself of this opportunity, &c.

(Signed)

M. DE GARAY.

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M. de Garay
to Mr. Frece.

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CHAP. II.

1809.
August.
Diary of the
proceedings of
the French
army in Old
Castille.

The following official review of the progress of the campaign is illustrative and interesting:—

Diary of the Proceedings and Condition of the Enemy in the Province of Old Castille, from the 28th July last to the 2d August, both included.

Leduma, 28th July.—The 1000 dragoons who were here have retired to Salamanca. On the 26th about 2000 French, between infantry and cavalry, entered Tamanes, and, after having robbed and plundered the town, retired towards Salamanca.

Ciudad Rodrigo, 28th July.—A woman who left Valladolid on the 21st, and is just arrived here, says that the garrison in that town was very small, and that the troops were constantly marching to Salamanca. They had demanded of the people in contribution 2,000,000 of reals, 8000 mattresses, 16,000 sheets, and had collected all the plate of the churches. The troops were very much downcast and dismayed.

Bejar, 28th July.—The enemy in considerable number have entered Alva de Tormes, Mastera, and Valdecarros. In Los Santos they have demanded 20,000 rations for to-morrow, and it appears that they mean to take post in Gallegos.

Ditto, 29th July.—To-day about 60 horse have descended to Calzado de Pedro Mingo, and have demanded 5000 rations in the village of Ledral.

Salamanca, 29th July.—Mortier set out on

Thursday with 6000 men. We took the road to Alva. Yesterday 1000 horse set out in the same direction. To-morrow many more are to go. There seems to be no doubt that they are going towards Banos. Soult will go to-morrow or the day after. Between the two corps and these which have passed there must be about 26 or 30,000 men, 18 pieces of cannon, and four howitzers. From Zamora they have brought four pontoons, some twenty-four inch shells, hand-grenades, and all the cannon which were there, and which they say belonged to Soult.

Puente de San Estevan, 29th July.—*Letter from Captain Don Julian Sanchez.* This morning we met near Tavera, about five leagues from Ledesma, a party of 62 of the enemy's horse. They offered us battle, and, on our attacking them, only two of them escaped, 28 having been killed, and the other 32, with their commandant, an officer, and 37 horse, I shall present to your excellency to-morrow. We had only two soldiers wounded.

Salamanca, 31st July.—Yesterday Soult and all his troops marched from this place, leaving only 400 men. Ney enters to-day. His corps consists, according to the highest calculation, of 10,000 men. The cavalry to-day is very trifling, and has taken the road towards Fevares, to prevent our parties from annoying them. The greater part of the artillery and some infantry passed through without stopping, following the road taken by Soult. The artillery of all the three corps must amount to about

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50 four-pounders, except about half a dozen eights. It is evident that Soult and Ney are at variance, and their disagreement seems to influence the soldiers. This morning two messengers arrived, in consequence of which the 267 men they had brought from Zamora fell back, and it is said they took the road to Valladolid. Romana is said to be in Leon, and an English corps in Causon. The French cavalry which were at Calzodo de don Diego de Castrejou set out yesterday for the Calzada de la Plata, in the direct road to San Pedro do Rozadas, where there is a large encampment.

Abberca, 1st Aug.—The French, to the number of 10,000 men, 800 horse, four pieces of cannon, and two howitzers, have entered Bejar; part of them are gone towards Placentia and Coria.

Salamanca, 1st Aug.—Ney's division have marched in with a great quantity of baggage, some artillery, and about 800 horse. They compute their numbers at 17,000 men, but they do not appear so many, although they exceed 12,000. They have brought about 500 shells from the castle of Zamora, and have taken the road with them and various other articles to Valladolid.

Ledesmea, 2d Aug.—The post of Salamanca has just arrived with the intelligence of the whole of the French troops who were there having marched, without leaving a single man. It appears, by various private letters to individuals of this place, that they were followed by 34 persons in their in-

terest. We have received positive intelligence that only 300 sick have remained in Zamora, recommended to the care of the junta. They have left in the vaults of Salamanca a number of sacks of flour, and in the convent De los Minimós a quantity of shells or balls. Soult threatens to overthrow the supreme junta, even though he should have but 15,000 men.

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August.

Diary of the
proceedings of
the French
army in Old
Castille.

These details exhibit strongly the desultory character of this period of the war, as well as the following letters do the painful conflicts between the allies, when it might be deemed nearly a war of provisions.

Seville, Aug. 10, 1809.

Sir,

I have received your note. It does not belong to me to answer it in the corresponding form, expecting my successor here to-morrow.

Mr. Frere to
M. de Garay.

I will only therefore observe, that, so far from marshal Soult having but 12,000 men with him, it appears, from the accounts from Ciudad Rodrigo, that he has at least double that number; and it seems, from general Cuesta's own letter itself, that the resolution he had taken, grounded on the intercepted one of marshal Jourdan's, was founded upon the belief of his (Soult's) having a still greater force. Sir A. Wellesley has detailed his motives in a letter to marquis Wellesley, and which I doubt not he will communicate to your excellency.

(Signed) J. H. FRERE.

BOOK V.
CHAP. II.*Deleytosa, Aug. 11, 1809.*

Sir,

1809.
August.Sir A. Welles-
ley to general
Cuesta.

I have had the honour of receiving your excellency's letter of the 10th instant, and I am concerned that you should conceive that you had any reason to complain of the British troops; but when troops are starving, which those under my command have been, as I have repeatedly told your excellency since I joined you on the 22d of last month, and particularly had no bread whatever from the 3d to the 8th instant, it is not astonishing they should go to the villages, and even to the mountains, to look for food where they think they can get it. The complaints of the inhabitants, however, should not have been confined to the conduct of the British troops. In this I have seen the Spanish soldiers, who ought to have been elsewhere, take off the doors of the houses which are locked up, in order that they might plunder the houses, and they afterwards burnt the doors.

I absolutely and positively deny the assertion that any thing going to the Spanish army has been stopped by the British troops or its commissaries.

On the 7th, when the British troops were starving on the hills, I met a convoy of 350 mules loaded with provisions for the Spanish army. I would not allow one of them to be touched, and they all passed on. General Sherbrook, on the 8th, gave written orders to another convoy, addressed to all British officers, to allow them to pass through

Anxious cau-
tions of deli-
cacy toward
the allies.

the army untouched. Yesterday I passed on the road, and met no less than 500 mules loaded with provisions for the Spanish army; and, no later than yesterday evening, major Campbell, my aide-de-camp, gave an order to another large convoy, addressed to all British officers and soldiers, not to impede its progress.

I also declare to your excellency most positively, on the honour of a gentleman, that the British army has received no provisions since it has been at Delytosa, excepting some sent from Truxillo by Messrs. Lezanes de Torres; and I call upon your gentleman, who has informed his friend that biscuit addressed to the Spanish army has been taken by my commissaries, to prove the truth of his assertion.

But this letter from your excellency brings the question respecting provisions to a fair issue.

I call upon your excellency to state distinctly whether it is understood by you that the Spanish army are to have not only all the provisions the country can afford, but all those which are sent from Seville, I believe as much for the use of one army as the other? I beg you to let me know, in reply to this letter, whether any magazines of provisions have been formed, and from whence the troops are to draw their provisions?

I hope that I shall receive satisfactory answers to these two questions to-morrow morning. If I should not, I beg your excellency will be prepared

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Sir A. Welles-
ley to general
Cuesta.

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Sir A. Welles-
ley to general
Cuesta.

to occupy the post opposite Almaraz ; as it will be impossible for me to remain any longer in a country in which no arrangements are made for the supply of provisions for the troops, and in which it is understood that all the provisions which are either found in the country, or are sent from Seville (as I have been informed for the use of the British army), are to be applied solely and exclusively to the use of the Spanish troops.

In regard to the assertion in your excellency's letter, that the British troops sell their bread to the Spanish soldiers, it is beneath the dignity of your excellency's situation and character to notice such things, or for me to reply to them. I must observe, however, that the British troops could not sell that which they had not ; and that the reverse of the statement of your excellency upon this is the fact, at the time that the armies were at Talavera, as I have myself witnessed frequently in the streets of that town.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

P. S.—I send colonel O'Lawler with this letter, who knows the truth of the facts stated respecting the convoys which have been forwarded, and respecting the supplies received from Truxillo.

This spirited remonstrance is thus answered :—

*August 11, 1809.*BOOK V.
CHAP. II.1809.
August.General Cues-
ta to sir A.
Wellesley.

Sir,

I have received by colonel Joseph O'Lawler the letter which your excellency is pleased to address to me with the date of to-day, on the subject of supplies and provisions, and on the transport of them from one army to the other. It has been my duty to credit the corresponding accounts which have been presented to me officially by all the commissioners of the Spanish provisions, and many other individual officers, up to the moment at which your excellency is pleased to declare to me that no provisions addressed to the Spanish army have been detained by the British, the which assertion I prefer before every other testimony. However, by inquiring into the origin of this difference, I suspect that it consists in the little order and agreement which prevails amongst the respective commissioners.

Those of this army shew me the original letters of the persons who transmit these provisions for the Spanish troops ; and, on the other hand, colonel O'Lawler assures me, that the intendant, don Juan Lazano de Torres, directs those provisions from Truxillo with the destination of the English army, on which account each of the said armies considers itself to have a right to them.

Being then desirous that both should enjoy in just proportion all the provisions that can be obtained, I have conceived that it would be convenient that all should have their magazines in Trux-

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August.

General Cuesta to sir A. Wellesley.

illo without distinction, and that the supplies which arrive should be distributed to both armies in proportion to their numbers, by the Spanish commissary, and by one authorized by your excellency, with union and agreement, since, when the number of daily rations which each army requires is known, the division would easily be made by the respective commissioners. On the other hand, I will repeat my orders, that no Spanish party, or commissioner, may detain or receive any article which does not belong to the said magazine with the approbation of the respective commissioners, and I will punish with rigour those who disobey, as I am now doing with respect to the serjeant of the king's regiment of cavalry, Joseph Gonzalez, whose receipt your excellency encloses.

I am far from thinking that all the provisions which the country produces, or which come from Seville, are for the Spanish army alone ; I do not admit this unreasonable notion ; but that, in the arrangements which the commissaries have endeavoured to follow up to this moment, each army should have a right to those provisions which it collected for itself ; and even, in this case, I have charged them to prefer at all times the English army, in its necessities, according to the means they possess.

I do not know whether any magazines of provisions have yet been formed and destined for the army ; but it is clear to me that the government is making the most active arrangements for the corresponding supplies of both armies ; and I hope they will not be long in taking effect.

With respect to your excellency's withdrawing your troops from the bridge of Almaraz, I confess that it would be very painful to me, on account of the great injury it would, at this moment, bring on the public cause, and to the defence of the provinces of Estremadura, Andalusia, and the kingdom of Portugal; inasmuch as our actual position is the only one which can secure these countries; since, at no other point more in the interior, could we make front against the enemy with so much advantage; and therefore I beg your excellency to take this subject into your consideration, before you form any resolution.

I have the honour to repeat to your excellency my particular esteem, and to remain your most attentive and faithful servant,

GREGORIO DE LA CUESTA.

P. S.—After writing the above, I have received your excellency's letter, including that of the junta of Placentia, concerning the entrance of 4000 French into that city.

The correspondence now proceeds to the commencement of marquis Wellesley's functions as ambassador, from which new views may be derived.

Seville, Aug. 11, 1809.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform your excellency of my arrival at this residence. I re-

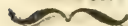
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General Cuesta to sir A. Wellesley.

Marquis Wellesley to don Martin de Garay.

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quest your excellency's permission to pay my personal respects to you as soon as may be suitable to your convenience.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) WELLESLEY.

Seville, Aug. 11, 1809.

Sir,

Marquis Wel-
lesley to
Mr. secretary
Canning.

On the 24th July I embarked at Portsmouth on board his majesty's ship *Donegal*, and arrived off Cadiz on the 31st, in the evening. I immediately despatched the messenger Basset with the packets which you had intrusted to my care for Mr. Frere, and with a letter to him, apprizing him of my arrival, and requesting him to notify it to the supreme junta in the most respectful manner. By the same conveyance I also addressed a letter to sir A. Wellesley, expressing my desire to receive from him such communications as he might think it proper to make to me upon the public service.

In the morning of the 1st August, as I was preparing to land, I received verbally, from lieutenant-colonel Doyle, intelligence of the actions which had taken place at Talavera de la Reyna on the 27th and 28th July, and of the glorious success of his majesty's troops under the command of sir A. Wellesley on that memorable occasion. No official advices of these events having reached me, and being satisfied that the most accurate and early

intelligence of the operations of the British and Spanish armies must already have been transmitted to England by sir A. Wellesley and Mr. Frere, I did not attempt to forward any despatch to you, with the imperfect statements alone at that time in my possession.

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Marquis Wellesley to
Mr. secretary
Canning.

I was received at Cadiz with every demonstration of public honour, and with the most cordial and enthusiastic expressions of veneration for his majesty's person, and respect for his government; of zealous attachment to the British alliance, and of affectionate gratitude for the benefits already derived by the Spanish nation from the generosity of his majesty's councils, and from the persevering valour and skill of his officers and troops.

The ambassador's views of
the state of the
public mind.

The difficulty of obtaining a horse at Seville detained me several days at Cadiz, during which time I had the satisfaction to receive continued and distinguished marks of attention and respect towards his majesty's embassy from every description of the public authorities, civil, military, and ecclesiastical, and from every class of the nobility, gentry, and people.

The same happy disposition of temper was displayed in every part of the country through which I passed on my road to Seville, and in my reception at the residence of the supreme government of Spain on this day.

The manifestations of this spirit of friendship and union have been so general and so evidently

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Marquis Wel-
lesley to
Mr. secretary
Canning.

sincere, that I feel myself bound to submit this detail to his majesty's gracious notice; and I discharge a grateful duty in assuring you, that the sentiments which have been uniformly declared in my presence by all ranks of the Spanish nation towards his majesty are scarcely surpassed by their acknowledged loyalty and affection for the person of their own sovereign.

During my residence at Cadiz I endeavoured to obtain information on several points of the orders which I had the honour to receive from you. I shall take an early opportunity of submitting to your judgment my sentiments and proceedings on those important branches of my instructions.

Immediately after my arrival at this place, I sent the enclosed note to don Martin de Garay, (to whom I had addressed a private note from Cadiz). He has returned a verbal answer, signifying his intention of visiting me at my house in the course of this evening.

I have the honour to be, with great truth and respect, Sir,

Your most obedient and faithful servant,

(Signed) WELLESLEY.

Jarayceyo, Aug. 12, 1809.

My Lord,

Sir A. Welles-
ley to the mar-
quis Wellesley.

I have the honour to enclose the copy of a letter which I received yesterday morning from general Cuesta, and a copy of my answer.

I have not since heard from the general, but I transmitted to him yesterday afternoon a report which I received from Mr. commissary Richardson, who was coming from Truxillo to the British army with bread and barley; and was stopped and deprived of all his barley, and a small part of his bread, by a detachment of Spanish cavalry.

I understand that there was a firing of cannon and musketry in the neighbourhood of Mesa d'Ibor, yesterday morning, at about eight o'clock. I have not heard from general Cuesta since I received the enclosed letter; but I conclude it was an affair of no consequence, and probably the Spanish posts firing at the French patrols, as I learn from lieutenant-colonel Waters from Val de Caras on the 10th (who had been sent in to the French commander-in-chief with a flag of truce, relating to our sick and wounded) that there were no French troops on this side of the bridge of Arzobispo, excepting those immediately at the bridge.

The enemy have been in motion for the last three days, viz. 9th, 10th, and 11th, in large columns, towards Placentia, from which movement I conclude that they are either jealous of the position of the duke del Parque's troops, or of those of general Beresford, in the mountains of Banos and Puales; or that they propose to invade Portugal, in order to draw me out of Spain.

In either case it is obvious that they do not intend to make a serious attack at present upon the

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Sir A. Wellesley to the marquis Wellesley.

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Sir A. Welles-
ley to the mar-
quis Wellesley.

south of Spain. I shall know, before the day is over, what course they have taken from Placentia; and, if they have moved towards the frontiers of Portugal, it is obvious that I must follow them. Indeed the experience of every day shews the absolute necessity that the British army should withdraw from this country. It is useless to complain; but we are certainly not treated as friends, much less as the only prop on which the cause of Spain can depend.

But, besides this want of good will, which can easily be traced to the temper and disposition of the general commanding the Spanish army, and which ought to be borne with patience, if there was any hope of doing good, there is such a want of resource in the country, and so little exertion in bringing forward what is to be found, that, if the army were to remain here much longer, it would become totally useless. The daily and increasing loss of horses in the cavalry and artillery, from a deficiency and the badness of their food, is really alarming; and the Spanish cavalry having begun to intercept the small supplies of food for horses which we could procure, this evil must increase.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

At this critical period, the following note of the Spanish war-minister breathes more than ordinary activity:—

Seville, Aug. 12, 1809.

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M. Cornel to
the duke del
Parque.

Sir,

Notwithstanding the royal order which I communicated to you in the night of yesterday, that, combining your arrangements with the marshal general Beresford, and expediting another order to the general-commandant of the army of Galicia, who ought already to have entered into your districts, all the troops should make a rapid movement on the Puerto de Banos, which appears the most practicable point for distracting the attention of our enemies, who are harassing the Anglo-Spanish army; his majesty desires, that, having overcome all the difficulties which may present themselves, you should regulate with the aforesaid marshal-general a prompt march, and should repeat to the aforesaid general-commandant of the army of Galicia the order to the same effect, indicating to him the nearest point at which the forces can be united.

I make it known to your excellency, that you may fulfil it, &c. &c. &c.

(Signed)

CORNEL.

How critical this period of the war was becoming, will be clearly seen from the subject of the following letters:—

Downing-street, Aug. 12, 1809.

Sir,

Your despatches of the 15th and 21th ult. have been received, and laid before the king.

Lord viscount
Castlereagh to
lieutenant-general
sir Arthur Wellesley.

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Lord viscount
Castlereagh to
lieutenant-general
sir Arthur Wellesley.

I am commanded to signify to you his majesty's entire approbation of your proceedings, as stated in those despatches.

The considerations which determined you to decline undertaking any further operations till the wants of your army shall be fully and satisfactorily supplied, and every arrangement made which may appear to you necessary for the protection of your army against similar embarrassments in future, has received his majesty's complete approbation.

I am happy to acquaint you that the course of measures you have adopted for affording aid to the Spaniards, and the reasons which have influenced your determination, are considered to have been throughout in strict conformity to the spirit of your instructions, and I have only to recommend a perseverance in the same line of conduct.

I have the honour to be, &c.

CASTLEREAGH.

Downing-street, Aug. 12, 1809.

Sir,

Lord viscount
Castlereagh to
lieutenant-general
sir Arthur Wellesley.

You will receive herewith enclosed copies of two despatches addressed by Mr. secretary Canning to the marquis Wellesley. The sentiments of his majesty's government on the present state of the war, and the campaign in the Peninsula, are brought so fully under your consideration in those despatches, that I have only to recommend it to your serious consideration, and request that you will convey, with as little delay as may be consistent with due deliberation, your

opinion on the several important questions therein proposed to his majesty's ambassador in Spain, transmitting to me, for the information of his majesty's government, duplicates of your correspondence with his excellency on this subject.

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Lord visc. Castlereagh to
lieut.-gen. sir
A. Wellesley.

I have the honour to be, &c.

CASTLEREAGH.

The correspondence continues to require no preface.

Mesa d'Ibor, Aug. 12, 1809.

Sir,

My disorder having increased to such a degree as to incapacitate me for discharging the duties of the command of this army, I have delivered it to-day into the hands of the second in chief, lieutenant general Don Francisco de Eguia, and I depart for Truxillo to-morrow, to take some remedies, and to wait for the decision of the central governing junta of the kingdom. I make it known to your excellency for his information, and that he may consider me, in whatever situation, his most attached and humble servant.

Gen. Cuesta to
sir A. Wellesley.

See p 182.

(Signed) GREGORIO DE LA CUESTA.

Seville, Aug. 13, 1809.

Sir,

Brigadier-general Doyle and major Armstrong will leave Seville in the course of the approaching night, with such communications from me as the short period of my residence at this place has enabled me to prepare. In the mean time I

Marquis Wellesley to sir A. Wellesley.

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have the honour to forward to you, by an express courier, an order for the duke del Parque, which you will use as you may think most expedient.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) WELLESLEY.

Here follows the series of new and critical instructions as to the peninsular war.

Aug. 12, 1809.

Mr. secretary
Canning to the
marquis Wel-
lesley.

The question which just arises is, whether the state of things in Spain be such as that a British army of 30,000 men, acting in co-operation with the Spanish armies, or in conjunction with them, could be reasonably expected either to effect the deliverance of the whole Peninsula, by the expulsion of the French armies now in Spain; or to make head against the augmented force which Buonaparte may now be enabled to direct against that country.

Crisis of the
Peninsular war.

Upon this question your excellency will receive the opinion of sir A. Wellesley, to whom a copy of this despatch is transmitted; and who is instructed to lose no time in communicating with your excellency upon it.

If the opinion of sir A. Wellesley shall be, that, with so limited a force as 30,000 men, offensive operations in Spain on an extended scale could not prudently be attempted; if he should conceive that the utmost object to which such an army would be adequate is the separate defence of Portugal, and that Portugal will be best defended by confining

his operations within the limits of present instructions ; your excellency will then only have to state to the Spanish government, if questioned by them upon the subject, the nature of the instructions under which sir A. Wellesley now acts, and the impracticability of going beyond them.

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Mr. secretary
Canning to the
marquis Wel-
lesley.

You will observe, that, after the refusal of the junta to admit a British garrison into Cadiz, the attention of the British government was more particularly and exclusively turned to the security of Portugal ; and to that object we consider ourselves as bound by the confidence which the Portuguese government has reposed in us, especially to direct our efforts in the Peninsula.

That the security of Portugal does not necessarily confine the British army within the frontier of that kingdom, nor preclude its co-operation with the Spanish armies, so long as the course of that co-operation is not such as to lead to the leaving Portugal uncovered, the recent co-operation of sir A. Wellesley with general Cuesta is a sufficient proof. But this species of occasional concert your excellency will state to be the utmost extent of the aid, which, under the circumstances here described, Spain is to expect from a British army.

If, on the other hand, sir A. Wellesley shall entertain the opinion, that, with an effective British army of 30,000 men, combined with the Spanish and Portuguese armies, it might be possible either to expel the French from Spain, or to resist even their

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August.Mr. secretary
Canning to the
marquis Wel-
lesley.

augmented numbers with a reasonable prospect of success; if he shall think that Portugal itself would be best defended in the end by making the defence of that kingdom a part of a system of general operations throughout the Peninsula; the next question which will then arise, and upon which your excellency will also receive the opinion of sir A. Wellesley, is, as to the conditions which it may be necessary that your excellency should obtain from the Spanish government, as preliminary to entering upon any concerted system of joint military operations.

Such preliminary arrangements would be most highly desirable, were it only with a view to prevent the recurrence of those inconveniences which were experienced in the last campaign, and of the complaints and recriminations which arose from them; but the reports received from sir A. Wellesley of what has taken place between him and general Cuesta, and of the state of the country through which he passed, the want of any settled plan, of any arrangement either for moving or provisioning the army, render it absolutely indispensable.

Upon all these points a clear distinct understanding must be established, and the Spanish government must be distinctly pledged to furnish the means of moving the army, and of supplying it regularly with provisions.

This is not intended to be done at the expense of the Spanish government (so far as the means of

movement go, that might be expected) ; but that the provisions and means of transport should be forthcoming, on the demand and at the expense of the British army, is so essential, that, unless arrangements to this effect are not only promised, but actually made, by the junta, to the satisfaction of your excellency and of sir A. Wellesley, there is an end at once of any question of co-operation, and sir A. Wellesley will be instructed to withdraw his army to Portugal.

In addition to this indispensable preliminary, which admits of no doubt or qualification, are two, with respect to the requiring of which your excellency will be guided by sir A. Wellesley's opinion.

The first of these conditions is that which was proposed to the Spanish government before the disastrous events in Galicia, and at the time when it was intended to transfer the services of sir John Moore's army to the south of Spain, *viz.* the occupation of Cadiz by a British garrison.

The object of this demand was as well to provide for the security of the British army, in case of their being compelled to retreat before an overpowering superiority of numbers, as to ensure the Spanish and French ships in the harbour at Cadiz from falling into the hands of the enemy.

The second condition is one which has never yet been proposed to the Spaniards, but which they themselves authorized one of their officers to propose to general Moore, *viz.* the confiding the command of the Spanish army to the commander of the British army,

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Mr. secretary
Canning to the
marquis Wel-
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Mr. secretary
Canning to the
marquis Wel-
lesley.

Sir Arthur Wellesley will report to your excellency his opinion, how far, under the present circumstances, and with a view to such a plan of operations as he might think it expedient to carry on, the occupation of Cadiz would be essentially important to the safety of a British army engaged in general operations in Spain; or how far the possession of the Tagus, and the present improved military state of Portugal, may make it less necessary to press this condition upon the Spanish government, supposing them to continue to manifest the same repugnance to it as before.

In the event of sir A. Wellesley's being of opinion that the occupation of Cadiz is essentially important to the safety of the British army, your excellency is to describe it to the Spanish government as a condition, *sine qua non*; of the employment of a British army in Spain.

But if sir A. Wellesley's opinion should be that this measure is not necessary in a military point of view, then, although the other object in contemplation when the demand was originally made, *viz.* the safety of the Spanish and French ships in the harbour of Cadiz, is one of such magnitude, that your excellency is never to lose sight of it, and is to employ every effort of reasoning and of persuasion to induce the junta to adopt such measures with respect to those fleets as may, in the worst extremity, disappoint the designs of the enemy; yet your excellency is not, on this ground alone, to make the admission of a British garrison into Cadiz

a condition, *sine qua non*, of the employment of a British army in Spain.

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Mr. secretary
Canning to the
marquis Wel-
lesley.

With respect to the second condition, *the Spaniards offered the supreme command of their armies to sir John Moore*. Mr. Stuart was present when this offer was made by M. Caro to the British general, and was declined. But with respect to this condition your excellency will be to a certain degree guided by the opinion of sir A. Wellesley, from reasons which his local knowledge and experience of the conduct of the Spanish armies may suggest, should he think it not advisable. Your excellency will, nevertheless, even in that case, take care to leave the question so far open, that if, in the course of his co-operation with the Spanish generals, sir A. Wellesley should find reason subsequently to change his opinion upon the subject, there may be no difficulty in making the demand hereafter. If, on the other hand, sir A. Wellesley deems this arrangement to be highly desirable, your excellency is to make it a condition *sine qua non*.

If the command is not to be in the British general, your excellency is to press with redoubled earnestness for the appointment of a generalissimo to the Spanish armies; the mischiefs arising from divided and independent commands becoming every day more apparent.

It is to be understood distinctly, at the same time, that, in no case, is the British commander to place himself under the orders of the Spanish generalissimo, much less of any Spanish general

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lesley.

commanding a separate army. Independently of the other obvious considerations arising out of the past experience of the conduct of the Spanish commanders, which would of themselves preclude such an arrangement, the nature of the engagements with Portugal would make it entirely impracticable. When the government of Portugal placed their armies under British command, it certainly was not with any expectation that the British general himself should act in subordination to another commander.

The result of these instructions is:—

First—That if sir Arthur Wellesley's opinion shall be against the engaging a British army of 30,000 men in a campaign in Spain on any condition whatever, your excellency should take an opportunity of putting an end to any expectation of such an aid which may be entertained by the supreme junta.

Secondly—That if, on the contrary, sir Arthur Wellesley shall give an opinion favourable to the employment in Spain of a British army of 30,000 men, on all or any of the conditions herein before described, your excellency shall immediately proceed to require of the Spanish government that the most effectual measures shall be taken for placing at the disposal of the British general such means of transport as he may describe to your excellency to be necessary for the movement of his army, and for securing to him a constant and regular supply of provisions; and your excellency will take care to have satisfactory evidence that these measures

are actually put in train, before any joint operation is commenced.

With respect to the other two conditions ; if sir A. Wellesley thinks either or both of them indispensable, your excellency will require both or either of them, accordingly. If, on the other hand, sir A. Wellesley should not deem it necessary to insist upon the admission into Cadiz, as matter of precaution for the safety of the British army, your excellency is not to make that admission a condition, a *sine qua non* of British military co-operation.

If sir A. Wellesley's decision shall be against requiring the supreme command of the Spanish armies, your excellency is not in that case to make the demand.

I have only to add, that your excellency is not to enter into any pledge as to the duration of the service of the British army in Spain ; and with respect to the Portuguese army, your excellency is not to undertake, as matter of course, that they shall act with the British army in Spain ; but merely that the good offices of the British government shall be used with the Portuguese regency, to induce them to agree to such an employment of their forces.

Sir Arthur Wellesley will be instructed to write to your excellency without delay on all the points of this despatch ; and your excellency will lose no time in informing me of the result of his report, and (in the event of its being favourable to the employment of the British army in Spain) of the steps which your excellency may have taken upon it ;

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Mr. secretary
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lesley.

and of the disposition which the Spanish government may show to adopt whatever condition your excellency may have had to propose to them.

Your excellency shall hear from me again as soon as we have the means of judging more precisely of the amount of force which will be actually disposable for the reinforcement of the army in the Peninsula; but it appeared not expedient³ to wait for that more precise information before your excellency was put in possession of those considerations, and directed eventually to take those steps, on the result of which it would depend whether the services of a British army should, under any circumstances, be extended to Spain.

August 12, 1809.

Mr. secretary
Canning to the
marquis Wel-
lesley.

Although it is not thought right to make the employment of the British army in Spain (if, in the opinion of sir A. Wellesley, it can be employed there with a reasonable hope of contributing to accomplish the great objects of the deliverance of the Peninsula, or in offensive operations upon an extended scale) absolutely contingent upon the admission of a British garrison into Cadiz, yet your excellency will be aware of all the importance of obtaining the consent of the junta to this admission at any favourable opportunity, and you are to spare no pains for effecting this object.

Whatever hopes may be entertained of a successful struggle, or at least of a protracted resistance on the part of the Spaniards, it is impossible to con-

template the force which may soon be brought against them, or to look back upon the examples of treachery which have marked some former periods of the contest, without feeling it to be matter worthy of the utmost precaution that a fortress of such importance, and interests so vital, as those which are connected with Cadiz, should be put beyond the reach either of the fate of war, or of the intrigues of the disaffected. At any moment when these arguments can be pressed with advantage, your excellency will not fail to use them; and if, by these or any other arguments, you can obtain the consent of the junta, your excellency is authorized to promise an adequate British garrison for Cadiz, independently of the army under sir A. Wellesley.

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August.

Mr. secretary
Canning to the
marquis Wel-
lesley.

Foreign Office, Aug. 12, 1809.

My Lord,

I have delayed some days sending off this messenger, in expectation of receiving some direct information from the Austrian head-quarters. Nothing, however, has yet been received, which throws any light upon the armistice, or reconciles the contradictory rumours respecting the causes which led to that transaction, and the consequences which may be expected to follow it.

Notwithstanding the want of authentic information, however, as there can be no doubt of the fact of the armistice having taken place, and as the terms are such as indicate the sense of over-

Mr. secretary
Canning to the
marquis Wel-
lesley.

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Mr. secretary
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lesley.

ruling necessity, under which it must have been concluded, I cannot encourage your excellency to give credit to any of those reports which represent the cessation of hostilities as merely matter of mutual conveniences, and the war as likely to be renewed. Even if the ground for such belief were more substantial than it is, I should be loth to induce your excellency to hold out any such expectation in Spain, where the disposition to rely upon every thing rather than its own exertions is unfortunately so strongly marked in all the proceedings of the supreme junta, that, even if there were a chance of the renewal of the contest between Austria and France, it would be in the highest degree desirable to take advantage of the alarm created by the armistice, to stimulate the Spanish government to those efforts, by which alone (whatever be the fate of other countries) Spain itself can be saved.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) GEORGE CANNING.

Foreign Office, Aug. 12, 1809.

Mr. secretary
Canning to the
marquis Wel-
lesley.

The change which has been produced in the state of affairs under which your excellency's instructions were prepared, by the disastrous result of the last battle between the Austrian and French armies, and by the armistice which has followed them, will naturally have directed your excellency's attention to that part of my despatch, No. 4, which prescribes the language to be held by your excel-

lency in respect to the employment of a British army in Spain.

Your excellency was there informed that it was only in the case either of complete failure of the efforts of the Austrian arms against France, or, on the other hand, of such decided success on the part of Austria, as should relieve us from all necessity of co-operation with that power, and should set the armies of this country free for distant operations, that your excellency “could be authorized to hold out any expectation of the augmentation of the British army in the Peninsula beyond the reinforcement then actually under orders, or in the extension of its operations beyond the limits assigned in sir Arthur Wellesley’s last instructions.”

Unhappily there is so much reason to believe the former of these two cases to have arisen, that it now becomes my duty to furnish your excellency with more precise instructions on the subject of military co-operation.

Jaraycejo, Aug. 13, 1809.

My Lord,

I have the honour to enclose an answer which I have received from general Cuesta to the letter which I addressed to him on the 11th instant, with my reply of this date. The plan which he proposes, of dividing between the two armies, in proportion to their numbers, all the pro-

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Mr. secretary
Canning to the
marquis Wel-
lesley.

Sir A. Wellesley
to the marquis
Wellesley.

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to the marquis
Wellesley.

visions received at Truxillo, however specious in appearance, would be fallacious in practice, and would probably starve the British army. It would not be difficult to forbid the convoys of provisions coming from Seville from going to Truxillo; and it is probable that the supplies of provisions from Seville do not amount to one-fourth of the consumption of both armies; the remainder being supplied by the country, in which of course the Spanish army has the preference. An arrangement of this description is impracticable of execution, even if the commissaries of the two armies would act fairly by each other; but this is not to be expected. Every commissary will do the best he can for the troops to which he is attached; and many articles must be procured in the country, which will not be brought to account in the magazine of Truxillo.

In short, my lord, it comes to this: either the British army must be fed and supplied with the necessaries which it requires; or I will march it back into Portugal, whether that kingdom is invaded or not by the French corps which have moved within these few days towards Placentia.

I have received Mr. Frere's private letter of the 10th, in which he has enclosed the copies of a correspondence which he had had with don Martin de Garay, on the subject of general Cuesta's evacuation of Talavera. I observe, from these papers, that general Cuesta had given the junta rea-

son to believe, that, when I marched from Arzobispo on the 5th, I intended to return to Portugal; and that he prevailed upon me to take up the position of Almaraz, by a message by general O'Donoghue and lord Mac Duff.

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Sir A. Wellesley
to the marquis
Wellesley.

I beg to inform your lordship, that, although general O'Donoghue and lord Mac Duff did come to me at Perelada de Gavin, on the morning of the 6th, general Cuesta knew, on the 4th, my opinion respecting our future operations, and my determination to secure as soon as possible the important points of the Mesa d'Ibor and Campillos; which if the enemy had seized, on his arrival at Almaraz, the combined armies could not have extricated themselves from the mountains.

I have also another observation to make upon this correspondence: my letters to Mr. Frere of the 3d and 4th were given to the general, to be sent from Arzobispo on the 4th; yet it appears that they were not transmitted till after the general had written, on the 6th, his account of the supposed success of the mission of general O'Donoghue and lord Mac Duff; and Mr. Frere did not receive them till the 10th.

I have the honour to be, &c,
(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

P. S.—I beg to mention to your excellency that the troops have received this day and yesterday only half an allowance of bread; and the ca-

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Sir A. Wellesley
to the marquis Wellesley.

valry no forage, except what they can pick up in the fields. The troops suffer considerably from the want of salt, and neither officers nor soldiers have had any wine for the last fortnight. In case I should move, I must leave behind me two-thirds of the small quantity of ammunition I have got, having been obliged to give all the Portuguese carts (which had carried the ammunition hitherto) to move the wounded; and not having been able to procure means of transport for any thing in this country.

Surely, my lord, the junta have had time, since the 19th of last month, to supply the wants of the army, with which they were made acquainted.

Jaraycejo, Aug. 13, 1809.

Sir,

Sir A. Wellesley
to general
Cuesta.

I have had the honour of receiving your excellency's letter of the 11th. The plan which your excellency proposes of placing all the supplies in a magazine, to be formed at Truxillo, and to divide them between the two armies in proportion to the strength of each, would answer perfectly if it were practicable; but your excellency must be aware that many articles of provisions are received by your excellency's army which do not pass through Truxillo, and could not be brought there without great inconvenience and delay; and would never appear in the accounts of the magazine; and that other supplies can easily be turned

off from Truxillo, without my having any knowledge of the fact. The British army receive no provisions of which M. Lorjano de Torres has not a knowledge, and your excellency has it in your power to give him such orders as you may think proper, both as to the formation of the magazine, and the share which the British troops shall have of it.

When the British army entered Spain, I had reason to expect, and I expected, that a great effort would be made to afford us at least subsistence for payment, and those means of transport, and other aid, without which your excellency is well aware no army can keep the field. Your excellency also knows how these expectations have been fulfilled. Since I joined your army, the troops have not received, upon an average, half a ration, and on some days nothing at all; and the cavalry no forage or grain, excepting what they could pick up in the fields, of an unwholesome description; by the use of which hundreds of horses have died. I can procure no means of transport, and your excellency knows that I have been obliged to leave some ammunition in the mountains, of which you have possession; and, if I should now move, I must leave behind me two-thirds of the small quantity of ammunition I have got; having been obliged to allot the Portuguese carts (which have moved it hitherto) to the purpose of removing the wounded soldiers.

The fire of the enemy, and the badness and scarcity of food, have destroyed many of my artillery

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Sir A. Welles-
ley to general
Cuesta.

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Sir A. Welles-
ley to general
Cuesta.

horses ; and I have asked, but in vain, for some assistance of this description. The consequence is, that I shall be obliged to destroy many guns when I shall move from hence.

I have not received even an answer to the request I made, to have a remount for the cavalry of only 100 mares, which would be entirely useless to the Spanish cavalry.

Under all these circumstances your excellency cannot be surprised that I should think that the British army have been neglected and ill treated, or at the determination which I now communicate to you, that, whatever may be the consequences to the valuable interests to which you refer in your letter, I will march them back into Portugal, if they are not more regularly and more plentifully supplied with provisions and forage, and with the means of transport and other aids which they require.

I have to observe, that, whether I put this determination into execution or not, the evil consequences which you apprehend to the valuable interest to which you refer will equally follow ; as the army will be unable and unfit to perform any operation, if the privations which it has suffered are still to continue.

I request your excellency to give orders to the troops you have sent to Truxillo not to prevent the officers and soldiers of the British army from buying what they want there. The troops have had no salt,

or other necessary articles, for some time ; and it is desirable that they and their officers should be allowed to buy at Truxillo what that place can afford.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

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While these critical discussions took place, the fate of sir Robert Wilson's active party was thus announced :—

Miranda de Castanas, Aug. 13, 1809.

Sir,

I have the honour to acquaint you that I was on march yesterday morning, on the road of Grenadilla, from Aldea Nueva, to restore my communication with the allied army, when a peasant assured us that a considerable quantity of dust, which we perceived in the road of Placentia, proceeded from the march of a body of the enemy.

Sir R. Wilson
to sir A. Wel-
lesley.

I immediately returned and took post in front of Banos with my picquets, in advance of Aldea Nueva, selecting such points for defence as the exigency of the time permitted.

The enemy's cavalry advanced on the high road, and drove back my small cavalry posts ; but a picquet of Spanish infantry, which I had concealed, poured in on the cavalry a steady and well-directed fire, that killed and wounded many of them.

The 200 Spanish infantry in advance of Aldea Nueva continued, under the directions of colonel Grant, and their officers, to maintain their ground

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August.Sir R. Wilson
to Sir A. Wel-
lesley.

most gallantly, until the enemy's cavalry and chasseurs à cheval in considerable bodies appeared on both flanks, when they were obliged to retreat.

The enemy's chasseurs à cheval and cavalry advanced in great numbers in every direction, and pushed to cut off the legion posted between Aldea Nueva and Banos; but, by the steady conduct of officers and men, the enemy could only advance gradually, and with a very severe loss, by the commanding fire thrown on them.

The Merida battalion, however, having given way on the right, a road was laid open which cut behind our position, and I was obliged to order a retreat on the heights above Banos, whence I was again necessitated to detach, in order to secure the road of Monte Mayor, by which I saw the enemy directed a column, and which road turned altogether the Puerto de Banos a league in our rear.

At this time don Carlos marquis d'Estraque came up with his battalion of light infantry, and in the most gallant manner took post along the heights commanding the road of Banos, which enabled me to send some of the Merida battalion on the mountain on our left, commanding the main road, and which the enemy had tried to ascend.

The battalion of light infantry, the detachment of the legion on its right, continued, notwithstanding the enemy's fire of artillery and musquetry, to maintain their ground; but, at six o'clock in the evening, three columns of the enemy mounted the

heights on our left, gained it, and poured such fire on the troops below, that longer defence was impracticable, and the whole was obliged to retire on the mountains on our left, leaving open the main road, along which a considerable column of cavalry immediately passed.

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Sir R. Wilson
to sir A. Wel-
lesley.

The battalion of Seville had been left at Bejar, with orders to follow me next day ; but when I was obliged to return, and the action commenced, I ordered it to the Puerto de Banos, to watch the Monte Mayor road, and the heights in the rear of our left.

When the enemy's cavalry came near, an officer and some dragoons called out to the commanding officer to surrender ; but a volley killed him and his party, and then the battalions proceeded to mount the heights, in which movement it was attacked and surrounded by a column of cavalry and column of infantry, but cut its way and cleared itself, killing a great many of the enemy, especially of his cavalry.

The enemy is now passing to Salamanca with great expedition. I lament that I could not longer arrest his progress ; but when the enormous superiority of the enemy's force is considered, and that we had no artillery, and that the Puerto de Banos, on the Estremadura side, is not a pass of such strength as on the side of Castille, especially without guns, I hope that the resistance for nine hours, which must have cost the enemy a great many men, will not be deemed inadequate to our means.

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August.Sir B. Wilson
to sir A. Wel-
lesley.

I have to acknowledge the services rendered me on this occasion by colonel Grant, major Reimar, don Ferman Marquis, adjutant-major of the dragoons of Pavia, captain Charles, and Mr. Bolman; and to express the greatest approbation of two companies of the Merida battalion, advanced in front; and of the commanding officers, officers, and soldiers, of the battalion of Seville and the Portuguese brigade. I have already noticed the distinguished conduct of don Carlos, and his battalion merits the highest encomiums.

I have not yet been able to collect the returns of our loss. From the nature of mountain warfare many men are missing, who cannot join for a day or two; but I believe the enemy will only have to boast that he achieved his passage, and his killed and wounded will be a great diminution of his victory.

I shall continue my march to Estremadura the day after to-morrow.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ROBERT WILSON.

Mesa d'Ibor, Aug. 13, 1809.

Sir,

Gen. Eguia to
sir A. Welles-
ley.

See p. 131.

I have the honour to inform your excellency that the captain-general don Gregorio de la Cuesta delivered into my hands the command of the army yesterday, who was incapacitated from continuing in the same by his disorder, and he

took this morning the direction towards Truxillo. On this account I have received the despatch which your excellency has been pleased to address to that general on the arrangements of provisions, or rather on the great scarcity of them, which the British army under your command unfortunately feels; and being desirous to contribute by every possible means to remedy an evil of consequence so fatal, and which has been undoubtedly produced by the sad situation in which the places invaded by the enemy have been left, I entreat your excellency to depute an officer in your confidence, who, with another of my appointment, may regulate this department in such a manner, that no doubt can remain of the sincerity of my expressions, and of my constant desire that the English army should be attended to with an absolute preference to that which I have the honour to command *ad interim*.

The national gratitude towards valorous soldiers, who have known how to prove with their blood in the field of Talavera the good will with which they have fought for our liberty, demands every kind of sacrifice; and the first should be, to deprive ourselves of all that may be possible, in order that that brave army may have no want. But your excellency knows that it is of small use to make efforts, if the effects do not answer the ends for which they were made; and this will inevitably happen, unless there be a permanent method in the distribution, and an absolute confidence that this distri-

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sir A. Welles-
ley.

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August.Gen. Eguia to
sir A. Welles-
ley.

bution is made with good faith, and with the preference which I propose. I make known to your excellency my sentiments with frankness, in which you will never find an alteration ; and I shall take a particular pleasure if your excellency will admit them for trial.

The commissioner whom your excellency will send, if you are pleased to approve of my plan, in order to treat on the subject in question, will be able to regulate those which remained previously in discussion, and upon which I have as yet come to no agreement.

(Signed) FRANCISCO DE EGUIA.

Of the honour as well as propriety of general Cuesta's resignation at this period there can be no doubt. This is certainly no place to enter into his character and history ; but a faithful narrative of the general circumstances of the war will not be deteriorated by either the one or the other.

The future historian of Britain will find, in the events marked by the correspondence of the last *few days*, topics of peculiar interest, both in a military and political view ; and no military man can feel them but with due importance. It must be remembered that the present book is devoted *almost* without remark to the interesting documents presented to parliament, but *never before* fairly laid before the military public.

CHAP. III.

MILITARY RELATIONS OF THE SPANISH ALLIANCE, AND CONTINUATION OF THE MISSION OF MARQUIS WELLESLEY.

Determination of the British General to desert Spain for Want of Supplies.—Appointment of Sir Arthur Wellesley to the Rank of Captain-General in the Spanish Service, with Presents, &c.—The General's laudable Caution, and dutiful Disinterestedness of his Brother, the Marquis Wellesley.—Arrangements of the British General to retire on Portugal.

THE resignation of general Cuesta was instantly communicated by the British general.

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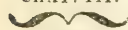
1809.
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Jaraycejo, Aug. 14, 1809.

My Lord,

I received yesterday from general Cuesta the letter of which I enclose your excellency a copy, in which he informs me that he has resigned the command of the army on account of his increasing infirmities. It appears that he had

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to the marquis
Wellesley.

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Sir A. Wellesley to the marquis Wellesley.

a paralytic stroke on the night of the 11th, which deprived him of the use of his left leg, and he cannot now walk.

I likewise enclose the copy of a letter which I have received from, and my answer to, general Eguia, the present commanding officer of the army.

The letter to which he refers as having been written by me is that addressed to general Cuesta, of which I transmitted a copy to your excellency yesterday. I have not yet heard that the enemy have made any alteration in their position at Placentia. It appears that they have thrown their posts forward towards Banos, by some accounts, as well as towards Corici and Gallicia.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

Mesa d'Ibor, Aug. 14, 1809.

Sir,

Gen. Eguia to
sir A. Wellesley.

Although it does not appear from the accounts of the movement which the enemy's forces are making on Placentia, and of the routes which they are taking to Galistio, that they have at present any settled plan of continuing their route, with the intention of attacking us, since the movement may alone have been made for the sake of taking up a strong and convenient position, from whence it would be easy for the enemy to collect those provisions of which he stands in need; nevertheless, it appears to me to be requisite, in conse-

quence of these accounts, that some precautionary measures should be taken, which may be effected by a general movement of the combined army.

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Gen. Eguia to
sir A. Welles-
ley.

The combined army might either act on the defensive, in a position which may appear to be the best, or, by a forward movement, to menace Victor and Sebastiani if they should join, as they have done once; or otherwise, general Venegas, having detached a division to the passes of the Sierra Morena, in order to strengthen the force which he has left there, might unite his troops to ours, and thus, with the addition of 20,000 men, at the least, to the force upon which we may reckon, we might arrange a plan of operations, in which the generals Beresford, Romana, and Parque, should take an active and expeditious part. Our present situation amongst the mountains, without any immediate resources, is the destruction of our army, and overcomes us so much, that we are no longer able to bear what we suffer; and I am of opinion, should you think it an advisable measure, that we should agree upon some regular plan, whether it be to act upon the defensive, in the position which we now occupy, or whether it be to pass the Tagus, and menace the Vera de Placentia, where it seems the enemy now is; or whether we should determine to await a more favourable state of things. The wish I entertain of acting in concert with your excellency in all points, and of not taking a single step which may not be by mutual agreement, induces me to address your excellency, in the hopes

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Gen. Eguia to
sir A. Welles-
ley.

that you will have the goodness to let me know what is your opinion with regard to the above-mentioned subjects, and in this I am actuated by my desire of frankly explaining to your excellency what is the state of my own opinion.

Last night I had the honour of informing your excellency what was my opinion with regard to the provisions; and, although we did not treat upon the means of transport, this will be arranged in the same manner.

The energetic measures taken by the government will put us into a situation of being without a want in a few days; and in the mean time your excellency may rely upon your receiving the benefit of all the assistance which comes to the army of which I have the command, as I had the honour of making the offer to your excellency yesterday.

I repeat to your excellency my affection and attachment to your person, and I pray God that your excellency may live many years.

(Signed) DON FRANCISCO D'EGUIA.

Jaraycejo, 14th Aug. 1809.

Sir,

Sir A. Welles-
ley to general
Eguia.

I have had the honour of receiving your excellency's letter of the 13th, and I beg leave to congratulate you upon succeeding to the command of the Spanish army.

I assure your excellency that I have every desire to adopt any arrangement which can tend to facilitate the procuring and distribution of supplies to the combined armies, and am fully convinced of your

excellency's desire to relieve the wants, and remove the inconveniences, which the British army has already suffered during its operation in Spain.

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Sir A. Wellesley to general Eguia.

I must observe to your excellency, however, that, with every confidence in the good faith with which an arrangement made by you will be carried into execution on your part, I am apprehensive that, from the nature of the proposed arrangement, it is impracticable of execution: but at your excellency's desire I have sent lieutenant-colonel Waters, of the staff, and Mr. Venyss, of the commissary-general's department, to Truxillo, where they will meet any officers who will be appointed by you, and, in concert with M. Lo. de Torres, the intendant employed by government with the British army, will settle such an arrangement as may be practicable.

These officers will likewise be charged to communicate to those whom you will appoint the particulars of the other wants of the British army.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

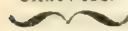
While such was the progress of military affairs, the diplomatic details of marquis Wellesley ran as follow:

Seville, Aug. 15, 1809.

Sir,

M. de Garay visited me in the evening of the 11th of August, according to the information which I had received from him. The conference commenced with mutual expressions of solicitude

Marquis Wellesley to Mr. secretary Canning.

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lesley to
Mr. secretary
Canning.

to cultivate harmony and good intelligence, for the purpose of facilitating the despatch of public business, and of promoting the objects of the alliance, and the prosperity of the common cause.

I availed myself of this occasion to state the general tenour of my instructions. I particularly explained my disposition, according to the spirit of his majesty's commands, to regulate the extent of my communications on matters of internal concern and administration within such limits as might be agreeable to the government of Spain ; professing, at the same time, my readiness to state to the supreme central junta, without reserve, my sentiments on every point, of whatever description, connected with the reciprocal interests of our respective sovereigns and nations, whenever such a freedom of communication might appear to be necessary or acceptable.

This declaration was received with apparent satisfaction, and the course of conversation immediately turned to the state of the campaign in Spain, and especially to the condition of the British army.

My attention had been fixed on this painful subject, even by the earliest intelligence of the success of our arms at Talavera. The first rumours which had reached me of the splendid achievements of sir Arthur Wellesley and his majesty's gallant troops were accompanied by such alarms respecting the state of their supplies and means of movement, as mixed a considerable degree of concern and solici-

tude with the sentiments naturally inspired by the extraordinary and glorious circumstances of that brilliant victory.

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My anxiety was further increased by the despatches which Mr. Frere had been so attentive to address to me during my detention at Cadiz and on the journey to Seville; and the reply of sir A. Wellesley to my letter, 31st July, exhibited the most afflicting views of the condition of the British army in Spain.

Marquis Wellesley to Mr. secretary Canning.

Mr. Frere informs me that he has transmitted, in duplicates, to you, the copies of the despatches which he addressed to me. I have, therefore, thought it sufficient to refer to their dates in the margin of this despatch.

Mr. Frere to marquis Wellesley, Aug. 18, 9 enclosures.

I enclose copies of sir A. Wellesley's despatches, from the 8th to the 12th of August, inclusive, with a copy of a letter which I forwarded to that officer by a courier on the 13th inst., and another marked (a), forwarded under the care of lieut.-colonel Doyle and major Armstrong. I shall have occasion to request your attention to many parts of this correspondence; but its most important and prominent feature is the severe distress of the British army, arising from the defects of its supplies and means of movement.

9th ditto.
9 ditto.
Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4,
5, 6, 7.

Sir A. Wellesley's letter of the 8th inst. reached me on the 11th, in the morning, as I approached to the city of Seville; and although M. de Garay informed me that the supreme junta could not grant me an

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lesley to
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audience during that night, and had formerly fixed the 13th instant for the delivery of my letters of credence, the urgency of the occasion appeared to me to require an immediate application to the government. Under this impression I entered fully into the discussion of the situation and wants of the army, in my conference with M. Garay on the night of the 11th; on the 12th I presented the official note, of which I have the honour to enclose a copy; and on the same night I received the answer, of which a translation is also enclosed.

The despatches which you will receive from Mr. Frere will apprize you of the circumstances which compelled the British army to retire from a defensive position behind the Tagus. Sir Arthur Wellesley, in his letter to me of the 8th instant, (No. 1,) refers to his despatch addressed to lord Castlereagh, under date of the 8th August, for a full explanation of that movement. He then proceeds to state the necessity that the Spanish forces stationed in the northern provinces of Spain should be brought into action, for the purpose of drawing the attention of the enemy to that quarter, and of relieving Estremadura from the pressure of the concentrated French armies, which had been brought into combination against the allied forces of his majesty and of Spain, on the banks of the Tagus. In the same letter sir A. Wellesley represents, in the strongest terms, the necessity of forming magazines of provisions and forage in the rear of the armies, and also

of providing mules and other means of transport, for the purpose of securing the supply and movements of the troops. This letter also recommends several improvements of a less pressing nature, for the regulation of the Spanish troops, and states the outline of a defensive system of war for the adoption of the Spanish government. The matters of the most pressing exigency, contained in this letter, formed the substance of my note of the 11th instant to M. de Garay, and from the answer you will perceive, with satisfaction, that immediate attention was paid to my representation. I have reason to believe that great exertion has been made by this government for the purpose of giving speedy effect to the plan which I proposed; and that I shall be permitted to superintend the completion of the several details necessary to the commencement of an improved system of supply and movement for the troops in the field. But the impoverished state of the country, the weakness of the government, and the inveterate defects of the military department in Spain, rendered any speedy improvement impracticable, and induced me to apprehend great difficulty, even in the ultimate success of any plan which can now be suggested.

In sir A. Wellesley's letter, No. 2, the same date, received also on the 11th, the description of the distress of the army, occasioned by the want of provisions, is in the highest degree afflicting. Sir A. Wellesley concludes this letter by stating that

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he must render justice to Mr. Frere in declaring that he does not conceive this deficiency of supplies for the army to be at all imputable to any neglect or omission on the part of Mr. Frere : sir Arthur Wellesley imputes this calamity to the poverty and exhausted state of the country, to the indolence and timidity of the magistrates, to the insubordination and disobedience of the people, and to the want of authority in the government and its officers.

To the causes which have produced and augmented the sufferings of the army, must be added the perverse and intractable disposition of general Cuesta, the commander-in-chief of the Spanish troops acting with sir A. Wellesley ; of this disposition you will perceive innumerable proofs in sir A. Wellesley's letters, especially in Nos. 4, 5, and 6, of the 9th, 10th, and 12th of August.

These unhappy circumstances have contributed to produce an unfavourable result in the state of the campaign.

In the letter dated the 9th, sir A. Wellesley forwards a despatch from lieutenant-colonel Roche, written on the preceding day from Paraleda de Garvin, stating that the enemy had attacked the bridge of Arzobispo on the Tagus, having previously passed that river at a ford immediately above the bridge, and that preparations are making by general Cuesta to retire to La Mesa d'Ibor. This was the first intimation that sir Arthur Wellesley had received of the removal of general Cuesta's head-

quarters from the bridge of Arzobispo. The duke of Albuquerque, who arrived at Deleytosa the same evening, gave an account to sir Arthur Wellesley of the operation by which the enemy had gained possession of the bridge and of the cannon destined to defend it, together with five pieces of artillery belonging to the duke's division, and stated it as his opinion that the French were that morning at Paraleda de Garvin, where general Cuesta's head-quarters had been the preceding evening. An aide-de-camp of general Cuesta, and lieutenant-colonel Roche, came in soon after; and, from the account which they gave of the situation of the Spanish army, sir Arthur Wellesley was apprehensive that they must lose the greater part of the artillery. He wrote immediately to general O'Donoghue, pointing out the steps which should be taken to save it, and strongly urging the necessity of withdrawing the heavy artillery behind the passes of the mountains.

The letter of the 10th (No. 5) was written after having visited general Cuesta's head-quarters. The whole of the Spanish artillery and waggons had then crossed the river Ibor, and about half of them had been drawn up the mountain to a place of security.

The last letter from sir Arthur Wellesley is dated on the morning of the 12th, from Jaraycejo. The French troops had then recrossed the Tagus, excepting those which remained immediately at the

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bridge of Arzobispo. On the 9th, 10th, and 11th, large columns of the French were seen in motion towards Placentia, from which movement sir Arthur Wellesley concluded that the enemy was apprehensive either of the duke del Parque's troops, or those of general Beresford in the mountains of Banos and Perales, or that the enemy intended to invade Portugal. Sir Arthur Wellesley expected to ascertain their position in the course of the 12th instant; and, if they should have moved towards the frontiers of Portugal, he states his intention to follow them. This letter concludes in the following words:—"The experience of every day shews
" the absolute necessity that the British army
" should withdraw from this country. It is useless
" to complain; but we are certainly not treated as
" friends, much less as the only prop on which the
" cause of Spain can depend. But, besides this
" want of good will (which can easily be traced
" to the temper and disposition of the general com-
" manding the Spanish army, and which ought to
" be borne with patience, if there was any hope
" of doing good), there is such a want of resource
" in the country, and such little exertion in bring-
" ing forward what is to be found, that, if the army
" were to remain here much longer, it would be-
" come useless. The daily and increasing loss of
" horses in the cavalry and artillery, from a de-
" ficiency and the badness of their food, is really

“ alarming ; and the Spanish cavalry having begun
 “ to intercept the small supplies of food for horses,
 “ which we could find, this evil must increase.”

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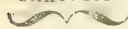
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Marquis Wel-
 lesley to
 Mr. secretary
 Canning.

From the tenour of these letters I cannot form any reasonable expectation that the system which I have attempted to pursue for the relief of the army can produce any salutary effect in sufficient time to enable sir Arthur Wellesley to assume offensive operations, or even to maintain a defensive position in Spain at an early period of the season. In the mean while the greatest alarm has been excited by the rumour of the proposed return of the British army into Portugal. This government appears not only to contemplate the probability of that event with terror and despair, but to consider it as a symptom of a disposition to abandon the cause of Spain, and to relinquish the obligation of our alliance.

M. de Garay and a deputation from the junta have urged me, in the most pressing manner, to use my influence for the purpose of detaining sir Arthur Wellesley's army in Spain, and of averting the destructive consequences which must ensue if the French arms should be turned into Andalusia and the southern provinces of Spain. But, although I am deeply sensible of the urgency of this crisis, I cannot attempt any other mode of averting the calamity than the active employment of the Spanish troops in the northern provinces of Spain, and the establishment of such regulations as may ultimately

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lesley to
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render the subsistence of a British army in Spain practicable and secure. The government of Spain cannot reasonably complain of the natural and necessary result of its own defective management, nor does any obligation of the alliance require that the British army should be sacrificed to the erroneous policy of a weak administration, or to the capricious and impracticable temper of its officers. The reduced state of the resources of the country is perhaps to be ascribed to a variety of causes, many of which are of remote origin, and of long operation. But it is not just to expect that the British troops should be exposed to the destructive effects of such a state of things, because the poverty of the country is not the crime of its present government.

I am not yet fully acquainted with the original motives and objects of sir A. Wellesley's expedition into Spain; nor have I been able to ascertain what arrangements were made by the Spanish government to provide for the movement and supply of his army. It is sufficient to know that the means of both have entirely failed; that they cannot be provided under the present system; and that no consideration inferior to absolute necessity could have checked such an army, under such a general, in the full career of success and in the moment of decisive victory. Under such circumstances, it would be fruitless, if not disingenuous, to engage to recommend to sir Arthur Wellesley a plan, which I know, and which he has declared, to be impracticable.

I trust, therefore, that his majesty will graciously approve my conduct in having abstained from offering any positive pledge to this government respecting the continuance of our army in Spain, and having limited my efforts to the improvement of the disposition of the Spanish army in the north of Spain, and of the means absolutely necessary to enable our troops to move, or even to subsist. In the mean while I am confident, that, if any favourable change of circumstances should diminish the pressure of distress which now impedes the active exertions of the army, sir A. Wellesley will either resume offensive operations, or occupy such a position in Spain as may be deemed most effectual for the protection of the southern provinces. Among the measures which might be suggested for relieving the sufferings of our army, the removal of general Cuesta from the command of the Spanish forces might certainly promise considerable advantage. In every quality necessary for an extensive military command general Cuesta is said to be absolutely deficient, with the exception of personal courage. This impracticable temper renders him peculiarly unfit for the command of any force destined to act with an allied army: and it is scarcely possible that another officer could be found in the Spanish service with equal disqualifications. Notwithstanding my conviction of general Cuesta's defects, I have not thought it necessary or expedient to demand or insist on his removal. This government is under

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Marquis Wellesley to
Mr. secretary
Canning.

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Marquis Wel-
lesley to
Mr. secretary
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some apprehensions of general Cuesta's influence, which is said to be extensive and dangerous; although it rests merely on the precarious foundation of unmerited popularity. But I have found no symptoms of a disposition to support general Cuesta by obstinacy or by artifice, or to sacrifice any interest of the alliance to his views or temper. The junta is well disposed to remove general Cuesta from his command in such a manner and by such means as they deem decorous and safe. If he should tender his resignation, it will be accepted with satisfaction and gratitude; and at all events the junta is prepared to receive a regular and detailed statement of general Cuesta's misconduct from me, and to act upon that statement. It is my intention (unless I should be anticipated by general Cuesta's seasonable resignation) to present to the secretary of state a recital of all the facts respecting general Cuesta which have been stated in sir A. Wellesley's despatches. I am satisfied that the immediate result of such a representation will be the removal of general Cuesta.

In the mean while I have limited my interference on this occasion to a strong expression of my sense of general Cuesta's misconduct, and of the impossibility of conducting military operations with any spirit of concord or union while he shall continue in the command. The tenour of his majesty's instructions of the 29th June, especially of the eighth paragraph, would require me to pursue this course of

moderation and caution, in a matter of such delicacy, if the ordinary principles of prudence had not recommended a strict observance of the same policy in discharging every part of the important trust which his majesty has been pleased to confide to me.

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Marquis Wellesley to
Mr. secretary
Canning.

I am satisfied that the removal of general Cuesta will be made with more cheerfulness and alacrity, and with less danger of unpopularity, if it shall appear to be the necessary consequence of his own conduct, rather than the result of the direct interference of the British ambassador.

The unexpected state of the campaign in Spain, and the exigencies which affect the condition of the British army, have compelled me to fix my attention on those points which constitute the principal topics of this despatch, and to reserve the consideration of many important circumstances for a future opportunity.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed)

WELLESLEY.

P. S.—Soon after the battle of Talavera, the junta appointed sir A. Wellesley to the rank and pay of captain-general in the Spanish army.

They also presented some horses to that officer, in the name of king Ferdinand VII., as a testimony of gratitude and respect. The rank of captain-general in the Spanish army is nearly similar to that of field-marshal in the British service, and does not

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lesley to
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Canning.

necessarily include the chief command of the Spanish army. I therefore was induced to conceive, that orders stated in your despatch (No. 65, July 18) were not applicable to this proposition from the junta. I have the honour to refer you to sir A. Wellesley's despatch (No. 3), under date the 8th Aug., by which you will perceive that he left me a discretionary power of forwarding to M. de Garay either of two letters which he had enclosed to me; and by my despatch (A) under date the 13th Aug., addressed to sir Arthur Wellesley, you will find that I selected that letter which appeared to me to be the most respectful to the junta, while it afforded a sufficient opportunity for the operation of his majesty's commands, if it should be his majesty's pleasure that sir A. Wellesley should not continue to hold the rank of captain-general in the Spanish army. Sir A. Wellesley has accepted the present of horses tendered by the junta; but has declined receiving the pay of captain-general.

In both instances, I trust his conduct will meet his majesty's approbation.

W.

Jarayeejo, Aug. 15, 1809.

My Lord,

Sir A. Welles-
ley to the mar-
quis Wellesley.

I received from marshal Beresford this morning a letter, stating that the enemy's corps, which had gone to Placentia, had, on the 12th, attacked and carried the Puerto de Banos. This

point was defended by sir Robert Wilson's corps, and I believe a detachment from the garrison of Ciudad Rodrigo. Sir Robert Wilson has retired from the neighbourhood of Talavera by the hills of the Vera de Placentia, and had arrived at the Puerto de Banos on the 11th. He writes from Colmenar on the 12th, at night.

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Sir A. Wellesley to the marquis Wellesley.

I do not understand that the enemy had made any movement from Placentia since the 12th. His patrols were yesterday on the Tagus, in the neighbourhood of Talavera and of the Puerto de Cardinal. Marshal Beresford was yesterday between Maselago and Garya Mayor.

I have the honour to enclose the copy of a letter which I received yesterday from general Eguia, and the copy of my answer this day.

I have just received your excellency's despatch of the 13th instant. Your excellency will observe, from my letter to general Eguia, that the marquis de Romana was still at Corunna on the 3d August, and probably at a later period. There is no chance, therefore, of a diversion being made by his army in favour of the operations of the troops in Estremadura; and your excellency will observe that the attempt of the duque del Parque to hold only the Puerto de Banos, although aided by sir Robert Wilson's corps, the assistance of which he had no reason to expect, has failed entirely.

I consider the answer of the junta to the note of your excellency, in respect to supplies of provisions

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August.Sir A. Welles-
ley to the mar-
quis Wellesley.

for the army, and to the means of transport required, to be entirely unsatisfactory. The army cannot exist in the shape of an army unless these supplies and means are provided; and the junta has already been informed by me, that if Spain, or rather that part of Spain which is under their government, which in fact now comprises the whole kingdom, excepting that part of Estremadura, and of Castille and Arragon, occupied by the enemy's troops, cannot or is unwilling to make the exertion which is necessary in order to provide the supplies and means, Spain must do without the service of the British army.

In respect to marshal Beresford's corps, which the junta was so desirous should be brought forward, I have to observe, that the marshal has great reason, with myself, to complain of the deficiency of supplies of provisions and other assistance since he has been in Spain. But this army is the only disposable corps of Portuguese troops which exists, and is all that Portugal has to depend upon for its defence.

It is not in a very efficient state for offensive operations, as it wants cavalry, is newly raised, and but imperfectly trained and disciplined.

The object in collecting it upon the frontier was to train and discipline it, and, at the same time, to defend the frontiers of Portugal, and to give an appui to my left flank; and the government of Portugal willingly consented to its quitting the frontiers for these objects; but I doubt whether the government

of Portugal would consent, or that I could recommend that they should consent, to the employment of this corps in an operation in Castille, giving up the defence of their own frontier, which is menaced with an attack, at the call of the government of Spain, who do not appear willing or capable of making any exertions for themselves.

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Sir A. Wellesley to the marquis Wellesley.

Accordingly your excellency will observe, in the different letters which I have written, in which I have recommended movements towards Madrid, I have not mentioned marshal Beresford's corps, knowing its service could not be spared at a distance from the Portuguese frontier, and that the Portuguese government would not allow it to move to any distance.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

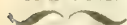
Jarayceyjo, Aug. 15, 1809.

Sir,

I have had the honour of receiving your letter of the 14th instant, relative to our future operations.

Sir A. Wellesley to general Eguia.

The last accounts which I have received of the enemy state that, on the 12th, they attacked the Puerto de Banos, with a large corps of cavalry, artillery, and infantry, where they were opposed by sir Robert Wilson's corps, which had retreated from Valavera by the hills, and had arrived at Banos on the 11th. The enemy carried the Puerto after an

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August.Sir A. Welles-
ley to general
Eguia.

obstinate contest, which lasted the whole day; and sir Robert writes from Colinamen on the 12th at night.

My opinion is, that, notwithstanding the strength of his reinforcement, the enemy is not strong enough yet to undertake any offensive operation; but that, if he should undertake any against the right of the combined armies (I mean the Spanish corps under general Venegas), the French corps at Placentia, supposing it to remain there, will be well situated to impede any operation which we, in this quarter, might undertake, in order to make a diversion in his favour.

The first object of our attention should be to get provisions for the horses and men of the army.

The horses of the British army are now so much reduced for want of food, that they are scarcely able to march the distance which it is necessary they should march in order to relieve the outposts, much less to undertake any hostile or forward movement, while the arrangements for procuring food and collecting magazines are making. I have already stated to general Cuesta, in a letter of the 10th instant, which I understand has been communicated to you, the defensive positions, which, in my opinion, the armies ought to occupy in this quarter.

When they will be prepared to carry on more active operations, my opinion is, that they ought to be directed in the right of the enemy at Pla-

centia; and it might be possible to bring the corps of marshal Berestord to co-operate in the plan.

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But I fear nothing can be expected from the duke del Parque, who is too weak, or from the marquis de Romana, who appears to have been still at Corunna on the 3d of this month.

Sir A. Wellesley to general Eguia.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

Andrea del Opispo, 15th Aug. 1809.

My dear Murray,

I fear we have consumed all the forage within our reach in this country, and it has required a good deal of industry to have lived here so long, I assure you.

Major-general Payne to colonel Murray.

To-day we have, in general, collected only rye; and the reports I have received from the officers who have been out are, that this country will not furnish us a full day's forage for to-morrow.

Pray state this to the commander of the forces.

We have only received one day's issue of barley since our arrival here, and that did not exceed four pounds per horse.

(Signed)

H. PAYNE.

Jaraycejo, Aug. 16, 1809.

My Lord,

I have the honour to enclose a copy of a report which I received last night from the officer commanding the British cavalry, in conse-

Sir A. Wellesley to marquis Wellesley

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Sir A. Wellesley to marquis Wellesley.

quence of which I have ordered him to move towards Caceres, to endeavour to procure food for the horses, where he will be nearly 30 miles distant from the army.

The enemy have made no movements of any importance in this quarter. They had their patrols at the Puente de Cardinal, and the people of the country believe that they intended to repair that bridge. I intended to repair that bridge myself in case it should have been desirable to move upon the enemy's right at Placentia, and had given directions for the collection of materials for that purpose; but the report which I last night received of the want of forage for the cavalry, and the consequent necessity of moving them to a distance, has put that operation out of the question, and I have now ordered that the Puente de Cardinal may not be so effectually destroyed as to render its repair impossible.

I have this morning received from general Eguia the account of the defeat of general Venegas' corps on the 11th.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

Jaraycejo, Aug. 16 and 19, 1809.

Sir,

Gen. Hill to
Sir A. Wellesley.

I beg leave to report to you that the parties sent out by the officers of my division, yes-

terday, to procure forage, were in more instances than one opposed by the Spaniards.

The following circumstances have been made known to me, and I take the liberty of repeating them for your excellency's information. My servants were sent about three leagues on the Truxillo road, in order to get forage for me, and, after gathering three mule-loads, a party of Spanish soldiers, consisting of five or six, came up to them with their swords drawn, and obliged them to leave the corn they had collected. My servants tell me that the same party fired two shots towards other British men employed in getting forage. The assistant commissary of my division likewise states to me that the men he sent out for forage were fired at by the Spaniards.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) R. HILL, *Maj.-Gen.*

Sir,

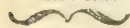
I beg leave to inform you that I have just received intimations of some Spaniards having fired at some of the guards for taking some forage.

As there is no forage given us by the commissary, I wish to know what I am to do in order to get some for the horses.

(Signed) E. STOPFORD.

The critical state of the army will be thus clearly perceived.

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M. de Garay
to the marquis
Wellesley.

Sir,

Seville, Aug. 16, 1809.

I have the honour to communicate to your excellency the information I have this moment received.

The duque del Parque, captain-general of Old Castille, sends advices of the 14th of this month, that sir Robert Wilson informed him of the enemy's having forced the pass of the Puerto de Banos, after an obstinate resistance, in which one of our battalions, under the orders of the lieutenant don Carlos de Espanos, exerted himself with valour; that, on the same day of the 12th, general Beresford was in motion towards Marcileja; and the mariscal del Campo informed him, from Salamanca, that the enemy, to the number of four thousand, with artillery and cavalry, was directing his march towards that city, having already entered St. Pedro de Royados, at four leagues distance from Salamanca.

Under these circumstances, the section of war conceive it to be most urgently necessary that the combined army should move, because the force which Victor can present is diminished; and in consequence suitable communications have been made to lieut.-gen. Francisco d'Eguia, for the object which has been pointed out, if he should agree upon it with sir A. Wellesley. I transmit this for the information of your excellency, in order that you may be pleased to make known your opinion to sir A. Wellesley; and may decide on the mea-

sures which will be most useful to the common cause, with attention to the circumstances.

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I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed)

MARTIN DE GARAY.

Seville, Aug. 16, 1809.

By the expresses from your excellency of the 13th of this month, the supreme governing junta of the kingdom has been informed that nothing new has occurred with respect to the enemy, and has learnt the news communicated to your excellency by lieut.-colonel O'Lawler.

Don Antonio
de Cornel to
gen. Eguia.

It is to be supposed, in consequence of this news, that the army of Soult is in search of that of the marshal Beresford, which was to have marched by Coria, and, in this case, it seems that no doubt can remain that the army of sir A. Wellesley, united with our own, should pass the Tagus now, particularly as it is known, by the observation of colonel Waters, how few were the forces of the enemy at the bridge of Arzobispo.

It would seem likewise expedient that marshal Beresford, by marching into the interior towards Perales and Gata, should attract the attention of the army by which he is followed; since, by calculation of the time which Soult must require for his return, there might be an opportunity of fighting Victor with diminished forces; and, in consequence of my communications to your excellency by the courier of yesterday, you will be able to make these

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remarks to sir A. Wellesley, in order that the advantages may not be lost, which might result to the just cause which both nations defend in common.

Seville, Aug. 17th, 1809.

Sir,

M. de Garay
to the marquis
Wellesley.

I have just received from the secretary of the war-office an official paper of the following tenour:—For the information of the ambassador of his Britannic majesty, the supreme governing junta of the kingdom gives me notice, that, on the 14th of this month, the captain-general don Gregorio de la Cuesta was informed, that, by accounts communicated by the duque del Parque of the 11th, it was known that marshal Beresford had put in motion his army, composed of 26,080 men, armed in every manner, by the Puerto de Puales and Gata, with the direction of Coria, in order to assist the Anglo-Spanish army in their operations; that, on this account, it appeared expedient and necessary to combine an operation on the offensive, and that, with this view, he should consult and agree with sir A. Wellesley; that lieut.-general don Francisco de Eguia was informed of the same on the 15th, and that, on the 16th, it was repeated to him that it appeared that there ought to remain no hesitation in re-crossing the Tagus, and with more reason, since it was known that there were very few troops of the enemy at the Puente del Arzobispo: that it could not but be expedient that marshal Beresford,

by retiring towards Puales and Gata, should call away the attention of Soult, in order that, Victor being diminished in numbers by the absence of these troops, the Anglo-Spanish army might attack him; the time having been calculated which it would require to pass the river and to attack Victor before Soult could return; and that he should make these observations to sir A. Wellesley for his approbation. By the despatches received to-day from Eguia, it is confirmed that the enemy has very few troops in the Puente del Arzobispo, although they had some cantoned in the neighbouring towns; it was made known that our army was moved on the 5th to Deleytosa, both on account of the great scarcity of water at the Mesa d'Ibor, and of the closer vicinity to the English army, in order to have the power of combining operations with its general.

The section of war conceives it to be very expedient that your excellency should be urgent with the ambassador of his Britannic majesty, in order that this movement may take place; since, besides the advantages which may be gained over the enemy, the more the armies advance, the more easy will be the means of subsistence; and it would be equally expedient to advise marshal Beresford, that, in case of Soult's falling back to the aid of Victor, he should return with all possible celerity to succour the Anglo-Spanish army.

All which I transmit to you by the order of the supreme central junta for your information; and his

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M. de Garay
to the marquis
Wellesley.

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M. de Garay
to the marquis
Wellesley.

majesty hopes that your excellency will be pleased to make the communications which you may conceive to be expedient, in order that these operations, proposed by the section of war, may be carried into effect.

I have the honour, &c.

(Signed) M. DE GARAY.

Camp near Truxillo, Aug. 17, 1809.

Sir,

Captain Aceves
to major-gen.
Hartman.

I have the honour to report, that on the 16th instant, in the morning, I ordered a foraging party, consisting of two gunners, one corporal, and five men of the 29th regiment, armed with four wains, to supply the horses belonging to the park of reserve.

The party went to a field on the left of Truxillo.

On their way home towards the camp, a Spanish picquet of cavalry, commanded by an officer, stopped them, made them go a mile back, compelled them to unload, telling the corporal that he wanted the forage for himself.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW ACEVES,

Captain of the German Artillery.

Jaraycejo, Aug. 18, 1809.

My Lord,

Sir A. Wellesley
to the marquis
Wellesley.

I have the honour to enclose different reports which I received yesterday of the measures taken by the Spanish officers and troops to prevent

the British army from foraging. The foraging parties, to which these reports relate, were necessarily obliged to go to a distance of four or five leagues (from 16 to 20 miles), in order to procure the forage they required; which, with the distance they would have to return, appears to be sufficient work for the parties and their horses. But when, having performed this work, they are deprived of the forage by the Spanish cavalry, it must be obvious that the equipments of the army must be ruined. I understand that similar outrages were committed on the foraging parties yesterday, but have not yet had the official reports of them.

General Eguia did me the honour of calling on me yesterday, when I communicated to him these reports, and he promised that the evils complained of should be redressed. I desired him, however, to prepare to occupy, in the course of this night, the posts in the neighbourhood of the bridge of Almaraz, as it was impossible for me to remain any longer in this part of the country, suffering, as the army does, from wants of every description. In my last letter I apprized your excellency of the wants of the cavalry, and my having been obliged to remove them to the neighbourhood of Carceres, to look for food. In my conversation with general Eguia yesterday, I found that the Spanish cavalry had, on every day, received some barley, although not an entire ration. The enclosed reports will shew your excellency in what manner this same cavalry, which

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Sir A. Wellesley to the marquis Wellesley.

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Sir A. Wellesley to the marquis Wellesley.

occupies every village in the neighbourhood of this army, supplies itself with straw.

The British army has had no bread to-day, the troops receiving, in lieu of that necessary, half a pound of flour, or one-third of a ration, for each man, notwithstanding that general Eguia told me yesterday, that on this day, and always in future, provision would be made to supply both infantry and cavalry with their full rations of provisions and forage.

More than a month has now elapsed since I informed general Cuesta, that, if the British army were not supplied with means of transport and with provisions, not only I could not co-operate in any forward movement beyond the Alberche, but that I could not remain at all in Spain; and the general informed me that he sent a copy of my letter to the supreme central junta, and indeed I sent a copy of it to Mr. Frere. In the course of this month, if proper measures, or indeed if any measures had been adopted, supplies might have been forwarded to us from the most distant part of Andalusia; but, instead of that, we have not received a mule or a cart, or an article of provision of any description, under any order given, or arrangement made, by the government; so that, when I shall march, I shall be obliged to leave behind me my ammunition, and six, and probably twelve, pieces of cannon; and I assure your excellency most solemnly, that, since the 22d of last month, the

horses of the cavalry and artillery have not received three regular deliveries of barley, and the infantry have not received ten days' bread.

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Sir A. Wellesley to the marquis Wellesley.

Under these circumstances I can remain in Spain no longer, and I request you to give notice to the government that I am about to withdraw into Portugal. I have no doubt that the government have given orders that we shall be provided as we ought to be; but orders, I have to observe, are not sufficient. In order to carry on the contest with France to any good purpose, the labour and services of every man and of every beast in the country should be employed in the support of the armies; and these should be so classed and arranged, as not only to secure obedience to the orders of the government, but regularity and efficiency in the performance of the service required from them. Magazines might then, with ease, be formed and transported wherever circumstances might require that armies should be stationed. But, as we are now situated, 50,000 men are collected upon a spot which cannot afford subsistence for 10,000 men, and there are no means of sending to a distance to make good the deficiency. The junta have issued their orders to supply the deficiency of transports as well as of provisions, but, for want of arrangement, there are no persons to obey these orders; and this army would perish here, if I would remain, before the supplies would arrive.

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Sir A. Wellesley to the marquis Wellesley.

I hope your excellency and the government will believe that I have not determined to go till it has become absolutely necessary. I assure you that there is not a general officer of this army who is not convinced of the necessity of my immediate departure.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

Deleytosa, Aug. 18, 1809.

Sir,

General Eguia to sir A. Wellesley.

I sent a despatch this morning to your excellency, with the communication of the official accounts I had recently received, from the commissaries in Truxillo, of all they had done to provide the subsistence required by the army under your command for this and the succeeding days.

While it appeared from the said accounts that the officers named by your excellency were satisfied with our zeal and services, and while I hoped that your excellency would consequently feel the same satisfaction, I perceive with surprise that your excellency persists in abandoning my left, without having been pleased to tell me the place towards which you direct your course, nor any thing which may assist me in forming an idea of this march.

Your excellency will allow me to ask this question formally, for the information of my court and my government: while you will take notice, that, until I receive a formal explanation on this subject,

I shall delay the departure of my troops, who are to defend the bridge of Almaraz, which is now occupied by the English van guard; and it is indeed my duty to declare to your excellency, with the greatest regret, that, if you follow up your system of leaving me alone in the position I now hold, I shall remain in it for a very short time, as it does not enter into the plan of my future operations to maintain it. On this question I shall send an account to the government for its superior approbation.

(Signed) FRANCISCO DE EGUIA.

Truxillo, Aug. 18, 1809.

Sir,

I have received with the highest respect and gratitude the royal order, which your excellency is pleased to make known to me, dated the 15th of this month, with the permission which his majesty has deigned to grant me, to take the baths of Alhama. I shall depart for that place by the straight road through the Pedroches of Cordova on the day after to-morrow, for not even the repose of these last days has procured any alleviation of my disorder. This would not impede my wishes to remain in the command, at any price, unless I considered it absolutely impossible for me to discharge its duties; since I count for nothing, in balance with the service of his majesty, a life as often exposed as it could be useful; but I think, on the

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Gen. Eguia to
sir A. Welles-
ley.

Gen. Cuesta to
M. Cornel.

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Gen. Cuesta to
M. Cornet.

other hand, that it would cause nothing but delay in the affairs and arrangements, with injury to the state. I shall not succeed in expressing my gratitude for the high estimation which your excellency is pleased to entertain of my confined services, unless by declaring my lively wishes for the recovery of my health, in order solely to enable me to continue them.

(Signed) GREG. DE LA CUESTA.

Seville, Aug. 19, 1809.

Sir,

Marquis Wel-
lesley to M. de
Casta.

In all my recent conferences with your excellency, I have stated to you my sincere regret to find that great embarrassments had been felt by sir Arthur Wellesley and the British army, in consequence of the conduct of the officer holding the chief command of the Spanish troops. Having fully explained all the facts stated by sir Arthur Wellesley on this painful subject, I assured your excellency that I relied entirely on the government of Spain to provide an adequate remedy for an evil which menaced the glory and even the security of the allied armies. In a matter of such delicacy as the removal of a general distinguished by the favour of the government of Spain, I wished to abstain from interference; unless the absolute necessity of the case, or the positive desire of your excellency, should require me to express my sentiments. Innumerable events have proved that it

is impossible to hope for any system of united exertion in the allied armies, for any degree of concert or co-operation, or even for any aid from the troops of Spain to the British army, if the chief command of the Spanish army should be in the hands of general Cuesta. Your excellency also has earnestly desired that I should express my opinion on this point with the freedom which becomes the ambassador of a king, whose cause is the same with that of your sovereign and of the Spanish nation.

To such considerations it is a public duty to postpone all motives of delicacy, and all sentiments of regret for the officer whose name has been mentioned; without reserve, therefore, I request your excellency to acquaint the supreme government, that, in answer to your excellency's inquiries, I think it necessary to declare, that I shall applaud the wisdom and public spirit of the government of Spain if it shall proceed without delay to make an arrangement for the chief command of the Spanish army, which may afford a more favourable prospect of union, cordiality, and energy, in the prosecution of the war.

I am, &c. &c. &c.

(Signed)

WELLESLEY.

Deleytosa, Aug. 19, 1809.

Sir,

I transmit to your excellency a copy of the express I have just received for the minister

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Marquis Wellesley to M. de Garay.

General Eguia
to sir A. Wellesley.

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General Eguia
to sir A. Wel-
lesley.

of war; that, with reference to its contents, and with the agreement which I am ordered to maintain with your excellency on the points it comprehends, you may be pleased to express to me your opinion on the subject, both for my own information, and for the purpose of enabling me to satisfy the superior authorities.

God preserve you.

(Signed) FRANCISCO D'EGUIA.

Deleytosa, Aug. 19, 1809.

Sir,

General Eguia
to sir A. Wel-
lesley.

I have received the official note of your excellency with the date of last night, in which you give me notice of your decisive resolution to march to Portugal, on account of the want of subsistence for the army under your command.

Your excellency, as I have already offered, shall have all that you require for your troops; and either the article, which your excellency desires to have, cannot be produced in all the magazines, or the English army shall have it: for, I repeat that the Spanish soldiers shall be in want of every thing, in order that nothing may be wanting to our allies. In case your excellency should not be thoroughly acquainted with my wishes, I have the honour to repeat to you that there shall be an English commissary constantly in Truxillo, who shall have a key of the magazine, and shall take from the whole the part which has been stipulated, according to

the numbers of the British army, and although my own may perish.

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General Eguia
to sir A. Wel-
lesley.

I conceive that I shall satisfy the wishes of your excellency with this positive and conclusive answer, while I likewise observe to your excellency that I have given my orders in Truxillo, in order that it may be duly effected. If, however, notwithstanding this answer, your excellency should persist in marching your troops into Portugal, I shall be convinced that other causes, and not the want of subsistence, have induced your excellency to decide on taking such a step. The answer which I await from your excellency will determine whether I shall send troops or not to relieve the posts which are covered by the van guard of the English near the bridge of Almaraz.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) FRANCISCO D'EGUIA.

Deleytosa, Aug. 19, 1809.

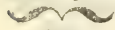
Sir,

I have just received the official note of your excellency, and it is to me a cause of astonishment how your excellency could have imagined that I can doubt the truth of your expressions, when the experience of the scarcity which is suffered by my own army must convince me that it is equally felt by the troops under your command.

General Eguia
to sir A. Wel-
lesley.

But I addressed your excellency under the supposition of the resources and measures that had

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General Eguia
to Sir A. Wel-
lesley.

been taken, and in no manner did I doubt of the correctness of your assertions. Your excellency, by supposing a thing very different from that which it was my intention to write, has obliged me to make this explanation.

I will send an officer to Jaraycejo to receive the ammunition which there is in that village, and I will take care that the park shall receive that which is delivered for it here, as your excellency informs me in the above-mentioned note.

Information has just reached me that the enemy talks loudly of an approaching attack by the bridge of Arzobispo. I conceive it my duty to make this known to your excellency, with an enclosure of a copy of this information.

(Signed) FRANCISCO D'EGUIA.

The following is the note alluded to:—

Jaraycejo, Aug. 19, 1809.

Sir A. Welles-
ley to general
Eguia.

I have had the honour of receiving your excellency's letter of this day's date, and I feel much concerned that any thing should have occurred to induce your excellency to express a doubt of the truth of what I have written to you. As, however, your excellency entertains that doubt, any further correspondence between us appears unnecessary; and, accordingly, this is the last letter I shall have the honour of addressing to you. Although your excellency has expressed a doubt of the truth of what I have written to you, I entertain none of the

truth of what your excellency has written to me; and I am well convinced that your excellency has given orders, and that all the contents of the magazine at Truxillo will be given to the British troops, even though the Spanish troops should want food.

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Sir A. Wellesley to general Eguiz.

But, notwithstanding these orders and an obedience to them, the British troops are still in want; yesterday they did not receive one-third of a ration, and that was in flour; and on neither days have the horses of the army received any thing.

These deficiencies arise, not from want of orders of your excellency, or of your faithful execution of your promise to me, but from the want of means in the country, and from the want of arrangement in the government in the timely adoption of measures to supply the wants, which they were informed long ago existed. But, to whatever cause the deficiency of means of supplying the troops with provisions may be attributed, it is obvious that it exists. According to the return of the state of the magazine at Truxillo, sent to me by your excellency yesterday, it did not contain a sufficiency to feed even the British army one day.

This being the case, the wants of the army must continue; I must continue to lose horses and men daily; and, in order to ease my army, I must remove to a country in which I know I shall get food, and other assistance which I require. Whatever your excellency may think of the truth or falsehood of my assertion, I repeat that want, and the apprehen-

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Sir A. Welles-
ley to general
Eguia.

sions of its future consequences, are the only reasons for my quitting Spain.

I have the honour to inform your excellency, that, besides the ammunition left at Deleytosa, I shall be obliged to leave here a large quantity, for the want of means of removing it.

I will send an officer to Deleytosa to-morrow, to deliver to the officer whom you will appoint to receive it the ammunition which is there; and, if you will send an officer here in the course of this day, he shall receive charge of the ammunition which will be left here, if your excellency wishes to have these articles. If you should not wish to have them, I propose to destroy them, as I have no means of removing them from hence.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

P. S.—I have received your excellency's second letter of this date, enclosing one of the 16th August, from the minister of war at Seville. The minister of war is entirely misinformed of the actual situation of the French armies. A large corps has marched to Salamanca; another is at Placentia; marshal Mortier, with a part of Victor's corps, is at Talavera, Oropesa, and Arzobispo; and the remainder of Victor's corps, with Sebastiani's, is in La Mancha.

Marshal Beresford is on the frontiers of Portugal, near Salvatiera. Under these circumstances, there

might be an opportunity of striking a blow with advantage, although no permanent good could be produced till the corps of the marquis de Romana, or some other corps, could be brought forward. But the minister of war forgets that we have no food; that our cavalry, from want, are scarcely able to move from the ground; that our artillery horses are not able to draw the guns; and that I have no means of moving, and I am actually obliged to leave here my ammunition, from want of the means of moving it; and, above all, that the soldiers are worn down by want and privations of every description.

It is extraordinary that the minister did not advert to these circumstances, which have been frequently laid before him, or that, adverting to them, he should propose to me any operation of any description, to which he must have known I was unequal; but his having omitted to advert to them sufficiently accounts for their continued existence.

(Signed)

A. W.

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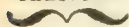
Sir A. Wellesley to general Eguia.

Truxillo, Aug. 19, 1809.

Sir,

When I manifested to your excellency verbally the very distinguished esteem which my government entertained towards your excellency and your deserving army, and the grief it had felt for the privations which that army had endured for some days, arising no less perhaps from the nature of the last movements which have been

M. de Calvo to
sir A. Wellesley.

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August.M. de Calvo to
sir A. Welles-
ley.

executed by the combined armies than from other causes which had not come to its knowledge until a few days from the present, I have assured you that they shall cease immediately, and that by means of their disappearance, and of the considerable remittances of articles of subsistence, which all the towns of this province began to make collectively, in consequence of the vigorous orders which I had addressed to them, there would be shortly an abundance of all things in the armies, and that their supplies would be regulated for the future in a manner by which the return of scarcity would be avoided.

Your excellency has not been pleased to trust to those assurances, and has declared to me your resolution to retire immediately to the kingdom of Portugal; and although I have repeated to you these offers, giving to them more limitation, since I have chosen to bind myself to provide, within three days, your army with all the rations it may require; while at the same time it should want nothing in the interval which could be applied to its use, although the Spanish army would be left with nothing; and within the first fifteen days it should have in magazines, situated where your excellency directs, all the articles which your army could be supposed to consume in one or two months; all the carts and mules of draft and burden, which could be required for the transport of those magazines, being likewise provided; your

excellency has not judged those new proposals to be more worthy of reliance than the former; and, while you qualified them as proceeding from the best intentions, you have declared that you had no reason for believing that they would be realized.

You therefore persisted in your intention of effectuating your retreat. At the instant of my return, I have arranged in such a manner, that from this time 7000 rations of bread, 50,000 pounds of flour, 250 fanegas of barley, 58 of rice, 100 of wheat, and 60 arrubas of rice, which can be sent on all the mules of burden and carts which are here, (and which, together with those your excellency already possesses in your army, will be more than competent to transport those articles before the noon of to-morrow,) will be sent to the positions occupied by your troops. I do not speak of flesh, because your excellency has told me that you had always an abundance of that article, as you have at present: if, however, your excellency is pleased to have a remittance of it, it shall be done to-morrow, in sufficient quantity for consumption of eight days. My activity should not rest until continual remittances of the same article shall have been multiplied, in order to prove that my promises were not in vain, and that your excellency ought to have confided in them, although the sphere of my operations would be much limited by this circumstance. There are various towns of this province, in which, by the

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M. de Calvo to
sir A. Welles-
ley.

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M. Calvo to
sir A. Welles-
ley.

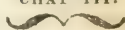
demands of the commissaries of your army, incessant and direct convoys of bread, flour, and flesh, are carried on.

If indeed there was, in the intention of your excellency, any disposition to vary your purpose of retreat, I am certain that I should obtain for myself the satisfaction of hearing your excellency yourself confess that I had surpassed your hopes; but, in case your resolution of marching to Portugal should be the offspring of other political or military motives, and not precisely of the want of means of subsistence, permit me to remark to you the fatal consequences which the immediate execution of it might cause without the delay of some days, during which the Spanish army would be familiarized with the idea of being abandoned by those troops who so much sustained its martial spirit, and who had recently inspired it with so much confidence by the valour of their conduct in the field of Talavera; since its immediate dispersion may be considered as inevitable, which would be followed by the loss of all its artillery, and the boats which formed the bridge of Almaraz. These are not imaginary fears; they are founded on a knowledge of the present moral condition of our troops; and your excellency cannot view them with indifference, as you know the sad result to which the common cause of the two allied nations would be exposed.

I entreat your excellency to have the goodness to

answer me by the same courier, the bearer of this letter, and to accept the sentiments, &c. &c. &c.

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LORENZ CALVO.

Jaraycejo, Aug. 20, 1809.

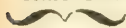
Sir,

I have had the honour of receiving your letter of the 19th from Truxillo, to which I write this reply, notwithstanding I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you at Truxillo in the course of this morning.

Sir A. Welles-
ley to M. de
Calvo.

I must first beg leave to inform you that I have no motive for withdrawing the British army from Spain either of a political or military nature, excepting that which I have stated to you, *viz.* a desire to relieve it from the privation of food, which it has suffered since the 22d of last month; privations which have reduced its strength, have destroyed the health of the soldiers, and have rendered the army comparatively inefficient. You gave me assurances yesterday, which you have repeated in your letter, that these privations shall not continue, that in three days there will be plenty of provisions, and that, in the mean time, we shall have all that the magazine at Truxillo contains. In answer, I have to observe to you, that I have received the same assurances from every Spanish commissioner who has been employed with the British army; each in his turn has disappointed me; and although your rank is higher and your powers are greater than those of the other Spanish officers who have

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Sir A. Welles-
ley to M. de
Calvo.

been with me, I acknowledge, that, in a case so critical as that of a starving army, I feel no confidence in your assurances, and I give no credit to the accounts of existence of resources said to be on the road, in what place not known, or of any others in the magazine of Truxillo.

In respect to the magazine at Truxillo, according to the accounts of its contents yesterday evening, which I received last night, it does not contain enough to feed the British army one day, and the provisions for the Spanish army must likewise be drawn from it. You tell me that the British troops shall have every thing, and the Spaniards nothing; to which I reply, that its execution is utterly and entirely impracticable, and is certainly very inconsistent with what has taken place hitherto.

Till lately I know the Spanish troops received their rations regularly, while the British troops were starving. I am not so well aware of the manner in which the Spanish troops have been supplied lately, but I know from the best authority, that of the commander-in-chief of the Spanish army, that the Spanish cavalry were receiving, at least, half a ration of barley, while the British cavalry had none; and I imagine that they have been well supplied with other provisions, as I have in my possession a letter from yourself, stating that you had ordered to the Mesa d'Ihor, for the use of the Spanish army, the provisions required for the British army by Mr. Downie.

the British commissary, and provided by the town of Guadaloupe and its neighbourhood.

I cannot, therefore, give credit to the execution of any plan, which shall go to give to the British army, to the exclusion of the Spanish troops ; and I conceive the proposals to have been made to me only as an extreme and desperate measure, to induce me to remain in Spain.

But, supposing the plan to be capable of execution, I could not give my sanction to it. The Spanish army must be fed as well as the British army, otherwise neither will be of much use in the positions which they have hitherto occupied. If the Spanish army is to be fed, and it cannot be otherwise, the magazine at Truxillo will be found not to be equal to one-third of the British army for one day, according to the official return I received last night of its contents yesterday. But, besides provisions, the army requires other assistance, for which I have called in vain, and for the want of which I have been obliged to leave behind me my ammunition, and to deliver it to the Spanish commander-in-chief.

I am fully aware of the consequences which may follow my departure from Spain ; not that I apprehend those to which you have referred ; for, in point of fact, there is now no enemy in our front. But I am not responsible for the consequences, whatever they may be ; those are responsible for them, who, having been made acquainted with the wants

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Sir A. Welles-
ley to M. de
Calvo.

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August.Sir A. Wellesley to M. de
Calvo

of the British army more than a month ago, have taken no effectual means to relieve them; who have allowed a brave army, which was rendering gratuitous services to Spain, which was able and willing to pay for every thing it received, to starve in the centre of their country, and to be reduced, by want, almost to a state of inefficiency; who refused or omitted to find carriages to remove the officers and soldiers who had been wounded in their service; and obliged me to give up the equipment of the army for the performance of this necessary duty of humanity.

I have one more observation to make in reply to your letter, in respect to the requisitions made by the British commissaries for provisions in the villages. There is but one commissary now so employed, and he is at Caceres. Indeed all the villages in this neighbourhood are occupied by the Spanish troops, and it would be useless to send a British commissary to endeavour to procure any thing from them.

But I shall be obliged to you to state where those commissaries are. Supposing the report made to you to be founded in fact, I suppose that, while the British army is starving, it may be allowed to a commissary to endeavour to obtain some relief for the troops for whom he is bound to provide, paying for what he receives.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

CHAP. IV.

RESULT OF THE MILITARY-POLITICO MISSION
OF MARQUIS WELLESLEY, AND MOVEMENT
OF THE BRITISH ARMY.

*Concentration of Facts to which the Attention of the
British Ambassador was necessarily directed.—
General Orders of the Commander-in-Chief on
the Battle of Talavera, in their own eloquent Lan-
guage.—Alternate Details of Movement.*

IT continues useless to interrupt this corre-
spondence, so explicit in itself, by any remark.

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CHAP. IV.

1809.
August.

Seville, Aug. 21, 1809.

Sir,

In consequence of the discussions which took place between M. de Garay and me, respecting general Cuesta, M. de Garay at length requested me to state, in a note, my desire that the Spanish government should take the necessary measures for placing the command of the army in the hands of a more competent and tractable officer than general Cuesta appeared to be by his conduct in the last campaign.

Marquis Wel-
lesley to
Mr. secretary
Canning.

Being now relieved by M. de Garay's express

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CHAP. IV.

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Marquis Wel-
lesley to
Mr. secretary
Canning.

solicitations from any difficulty, I addressed the enclosed note to him, to which he has returned the answer, of which a translation is enclosed.

You will observe that general Cuesta's health had required him to desire to be relieved from the command of Estremadura, and that his resignation had been accepted by the government.

The government avails itself of this occasion to urge the continuance of the British army in Spain, and insinuates that some assurance from me to that effect would be required, previously to the selection of a successor to general Cuesta. I have not thought the insinuation of sufficient importance to justify my particular notice. In the mean time the command in Estremadura has devolved on general Eguia, an officer whose local knowledge of Spain is said to be considerable, but who is described to be otherwise quite incapable of holding such a command.

The most proper person for the command in Estremadura would be the duke of Albuquerque, who has been distinguished by several acts of gallantry and spirit in the last campaign. He is an object of jealousy to the junta; and, if he should be appointed to the command in Estremadura, attempts will certainly be made to reduce the strength of that division of the Spanish army.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) WELLESLEY.

Seville, Aug. 21, 1809.

Sir,

I have given an account to the supreme central and governing junta of the kingdom of the contents of the official note which your excellency was pleased to address to me under date of the 19th instant, in which your excellency pointed out the necessity that existed of altering the command of the Spanish army of Estremadura, now in the hands of general don Gregorio de la Cuesta ; and his majesty being acquainted with the motives which your excellency explains, as requiring this alteration, commands me to answer your excellency as follows :—

On this day permission was granted to the said general to go and take the baths in the kingdom of Grenada, as your excellency will perceive from the enclosed copy, which I transmit for that purpose ; consequently the cause no longer exists which might have caused the delays and dissensions which have unfortunately taken place with the general sir Arthur Wellesley ; and that with regard to proceeding, immediately, to form an arrangement for the command-in-chief of that army, which might give a more favourable prospect of union, cordiality, and energy, in the prosecution of the war, the supreme junta could desire nothing with more zeal and satisfaction than to accomplish this point, in agreement with your excellency, or with general Wellesley, since the results which would

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August.M. de Garay to
the marquis
Wellesley.

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August.M. de Garay to
the marquis
Wellesley.

be obtained would be the advantages proposed by your excellency, which are the same which the junta desires with the greatest ardour, and of which it has given so many proofs; but as it is manifest from the letter which the general sir Arthur Wellesley has written to your excellency, and of which your excellency has been pleased to transmit to me the original, that it is his decided resolution to retire into Portugal, it appears that, in order to determine a question of so much importance, it would be equally necessary to suspend the execution of that design; for, if the reverse should happen, no arrangement, however adapted it may be to the interest and views of the two nations, could be carried into execution, or would cause the effects we so much desire, and which are so much to the advantage of both powers.

The supreme junta hopes that your excellency will take these reflections into your consideration, and that, with your well-known integrity and zeal for the just cause we are engaged in defending, you will make the arrangements which your prudence dictates, and which you conceive most conducive to the attainment of the objects to which our respective sovereigns so ardently aspire; as you will be finally convinced that the want of provisions in the English army, and of other articles, of which its general has complained, is in a course of expeditious remedy, as far as the country and circumstances allow; since the most precise and effi-

cient orders to this effect have been expedited to the various departments.

Your excellency is not ignorant of the enthusiasm and joy which pervaded the whole Spanish nation when it beheld the British army approach to co-operate in its defence, and to deliver it from the tyrant who attempts to despoil it of its independence; and for the same reason your excellency will be able to imagine to yourself with ease what would be the desolation of that nation, should they behold the retreat of that same army, on which they had fixed all their hopes for the attainment of their liberty; for they would conceive that other motives must have produced the departure of an ally, on which they had reposed their whole confidence.

I have the honour to lay before your excellency these observations for your consideration, in consequence of a royal order; and I repeat on this occasion,

&c. &c. &c.

(Signed) MARTIN DE GARAY.

Truxillo, Aug. 21, 1809.

My Lord,

When I marched from Talavera, on the 3d instant, with a view to oppose the French corps which we had heard had passed through the Puerto de Banos, and had arrived at Placentia, sir Robert Wilson was detached upon the left of the army towards Escalona; and before I marched on that morning I put him in communication with

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August.

M. de Garay to
the marquis
Wellesley.

Sir A. Wellesley
to lord visc.
Castlereagh

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1809.
August.

Sir A. Wellesley
to lord visc.
Castlereagh.

the Spanish general Cuesta, who it had been settled was to remain at Talavera. I understand that general Cuesta put sir Robert in communication with his advanced guard, which retired from Talavera on the night of the 4th.

Sir Robert Wilson, however, did not arrive at Valada till the night of the 4th, having made a long march through the mountains; and he was then six leagues from the bridge of Arzobispo, and had to cross the high road from Oropesa to Talavera, of which the enemy was in possession. He conceived that he was too late to retire to Arzobispo, and he was determined to move by Puerto St. Julian and Centinello towards the Tietar, and across that river towards the mountains which separate Castille from Estremadura.

Some of sir Robert Wilson's despatches have missed me, and I am not aware by which of the passes he went through the mountains, but I believe by Tornavacas. He arrived, however, at Banos, on the 11th, and on the 12th was attacked and defeated by the French corps of marshal Ney, which, with that of Soult, returned to Placentia on the 9th, 10th, and 11th, that of Ney having since gone on towards Salamanca.

I enclose sir Robert Wilson's account of the action. He has been very active, intelligent, and useful, in the command of the Portuguese and Spanish corps, with which he was detached from this army. Before the battle of the 28th July he had

pushed his parties almost to the gates of Madrid, with which city he was in communication; and he would have been in Madrid, if I had not thought it proper to call him in, in expectation of that general action which took place on the 28th July.

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1809.
August.

Sir A. Wellesley
to lord visc.
Castlereagh.

He afterwards alarmed the enemy on the right of this army, and throughout the service shewed himself to be an active and intelligent *partisan**, well acquainted with the country in which he was acting, and possessing the confidence of the troops which he commanded.

Being persuaded that his retreat was not open by Arzobispo, he acted right in taking the road he did, with which he was well acquainted; and although unsuccessful in the action which he fought, which may be well accounted for by the superior numbers and description of the enemy's troops, the action, in my opinion, does him great credit.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

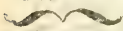
Truxillo, Aug. 21, 1809.

My Lord,

General Cuesta moved his headquarters from the neighbourhood of the bridge of Arzobispo, on the night of the 7th instant, to Peraleda de Garbin, leaving an advanced guard, consisting of two divisions of infantry, and the duke d'Albuquerque's division of cavalry, for the

Sir A. Wellesley
to lord visc.
Castlereagh.

* This term was ill relished by sir R. Wilson's corps.

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 Sir A. Wellesley
to Lord Viscount
Castlereagh.

defence of the passage of the Tagus at this point. The French cavalry passed the Tagus at a ford immediately above the bridge at half past one in the afternoon of the 8th, and surprised this advanced guard, which retired, leaving behind them all their cannon, as well as those in the batteries, constructed for the defence of the bridge.

The general then moved his head-quarters to the Mesa d'Ibor, on the evening of the 8th, having his advanced guard at Bohonal. He resigned the command of the army on the 12th (on account of the bad state of his health), which has devolved upon general Eguia. The head-quarters of the Spanish army are now at Deleytosa.

It appears that a detachment of Venegas's army had some success against the enemy in an attack made upon it in the neighbourhood of Aranjuez, on the 5th instant. General Venegas was then at Ocana, and he had determined to retire towards the Sierra Morena, and after the 5th he had moved in that direction. He returned, however, towards Toledo, with an intention of attacking the enemy on the 12th instant; but on the 11th the enemy attacked him, with Sebastiani's corps and two divisions of Victor's, in the neighbourhood of Almoracid. The action appears to have lasted some hours; but, the French having at last gained an advantage on general Venegas's left, he was obliged to retire, and was about to resume his position in the Sierra Morena.

On the 9th, 10th, and 11th, large detachments of the French troops which had come from Placentia returned to that quarter; and on the 12th they attacked and defeated sir Robert Wilson in the Puerto de Banos, on their return to Salamanca.

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At last
S. V. Wesley
to Lord visc.
Castlereagh.

It appears now that the French force in this part of Spain is distributed as follows:—Marshal Victor's corps is divided between Talavera and La Mancha; Sebastiani's is in La Mancha; marshal Mortier's at Oropesa, Arzobispo, and Naval Moral; marshal Soult's at Placentia, and marshal Ney's at Salamanca.

From this distribution of their force it is obvious that they do not intend at present to undertake any offensive operation; if any, it will be on the right, in La Mancha; at the same time that, if the combined armies were in a situation to be enabled to undertake any thing, they would experience great difficulty in the operation, and might be exposed to the same misfortune as that which stopped them lately, and deprived them of the fruits of their victory at Talavera.

But, from what has been stated, your lordship will observe that the British part of the army at least is incapable of undertaking any thing; and that the distress for want of provisions, and its effects have at last obliged me to move towards the frontiers of Portugal, in order to refresh my troops.

In my former despatches I have informed your lordship of our distress for the want of provisions

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August.Sir A. Wellesley
to lord visc.
Castlereagh.

and the means of transport. Those wants, which were the first cause of the loss of many advantages after the 22d of July, which were made known to the government, and were actually known by them on the 20th of last month, still exist in an aggravated degree, and have produced all the evil effects upon the health and efficiency of the army which might have been expected from them.

Since the 22d of last month, when the Spanish and British armies joined, the troops have not received ten days' bread; on some days they have received nothing; and for many days together only meat, without salt, frequently flour instead of bread, and scarcely ever more than one-third, or at most half, a ration. The cavalry and the horses of the army have not received in the same time three regular deliveries of forage, particularly of barley, the only wholesome subsistence for a horse in this country; and the horses have been kept alive by what they could pick up for themselves, for which they have been frequently obliged to go from 12 to 20 miles distance, particularly lately.

During a great part of this time, at least till the 4th or 5th of this month, I know that the Spanish army received their regular rations daily. After they lost the bridge of Arzobispo, I believe they were in want for some days; but, since they have come through the passes of the mountains, I know, from the best authority (that of general Eguia), that the Spanish cavalry have been supplied daily

with at least half a ration of barley, and I believe the troops have received their regular allowance of bread.

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August.

The consequence of these privations upon the British army has been the loss of many horses of the cavalry and artillery. We lost 100 in the cavalry last week ; and we now want 1000 horses to complete the six regiments of dragoons, besides about 700 that are sick, and will probably be fit for service only after a considerable period of rest and good food. The horses of the artillery are also much diminished in numbers, and are scarcely able to draw the guns.

Sir A. Wellesley
to lord visc.
Castlereagh.

The sickness of the army, from the same cause, has increased considerably, particularly among the officers, who have fared no better than the soldiers, and have had nothing but water to drink, and frequently nothing but meat without salt to eat, and seldom any bread for the last month. Indeed, there are few, if any, of the officers or soldiers of the army, who, although doing their duty, are not more or less affected by dysentery ; the whole lay out, and nothing can be got for them in this part of the country.

To these circumstances I must add, that I have not been able to procure means of transport since my arrival in Spain. I was obliged to employ the largest proportion of the carts of the army, whether they carried money or ammunition, to convey the wounded soldiers to the hospital at Elvas ; and the ammunition which was laid down at Mesa

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August.

Sir A. Wellesley
to Lord Viscount
Castlereagh.

d'Ibor and Deleytosa was delivered to the Spanish general.

The few carts which remained in the army were required to move the sick we have at present ; and I have been obliged to leave behind me the remainder of the reserve ammunition, which I have likewise given to the Spanish troops ; and, if I had waited longer, I should not have been able to move at all without leaving the sick behind.

Under these circumstances, I determined to break up on the 20th from Jaraicejo, where I had my head-quarters since the 11th, with the advanced posts on the Tagus, near the bridge of Almaraz ; and to fall back upon the frontiers of Portugal, where I hope I shall be supplied with every thing I want.

I have given your lordship only an outline of the distresses of the army ; you will find the details of them in my correspondence with the British ministers at Seville, copies of which I conclude they will send home to the foreign office.

Your lordship will observe, that, from the dispersed situation of the French army, and the losses the enemy has sustained, the Spanish troops are not likely to suffer any inconvenience from our absence ; but I assure your lordship, that, if I had been certain that the enemy could and would attack the Spaniards on the day after my departure, I could not with justice to the army have remained any longer ; and there is not a general officer in the army who has not repeatedly represented the la-

mentable and neglected situation in which we were placed, and the absolute necessity which existed that I should withdraw from Spain altogether.

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August.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

Truxillo, Aug. 21, 1809.

My Lord,

I have the honour to enclose a copy of a letter, which I have received, on the 4th instant, from don Martin de Garay, the Spanish secretary of state, conveying to me the instructions of the government to appoint me a captain-general in the service, with the pay of that rank; and presenting me with six Andalusian horses, in the name of king Ferdinand VII.

Sir A. Wellesley
to lord visc.
Castlereagh.

My wish was to lay this mark of the approbation of the Spanish government before his majesty, and to delay to accept it till his majesty's pleasure should be known; but it occurred to me that this mode of proceeding might not be understood at Seville, and that the Spanish government might be displeased with the temporary refusal of the honour they conferred upon me; that it might interfere with political objects which the British ambassador might have in view, at the time that I might make the acceptance, referable to the subsequent pleasure of his majesty.

I therefore wrote two answers to this part of don Martin de Garay's letter, of which I enclose copies,

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to lord visc.
Castlereagh.

leaving it to lord Wellesley to deliver that which he thought proper, in a letter to his lordship, of which I enclose a copy; and I enclose a copy of his lordship's answer, stating that he had delivered the second letter. I accepted the horses which the government intended to present to me in the name of king Ferdinand VII.; but declined to accept the pay of the captain-general in another letter to don Martin de Garay, of which I enclose the copy.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

Downing-street, Aug. 21, 1809.

Sir,

Lord viscount
Castlereagh to
lieut.-general
sir A. Welles-
ley.

Your letters of the dates referred to in the margin have been received, and laid before the king.

That of the 29th July, which reports the result of an attack made on the combined British and Spanish armies, near Talavera de la Reyna, on the 27th and 28th ult. by the united corps of Victor, Sebastiani, and the troops from Madrid, has been received by his majesty with the utmost interest and satisfaction.

29th July.
1st August.
1st ———

The nature of the position occupied by the Spanish army, and the deliberate purpose of the enemy to direct his whole efforts against the troops of his majesty, as it has thrown upon the British army nearly the entire weight of this great contest, has afforded them an opportunity of acquiring for them-

selves the immortal glory of having vanquished a French army of more than double their numbers; not in a short and partial struggle, but in a battle obstinately contested in two successive days, not wholly discontinued throughout the intervening night, and fought under circumstances which brought the mass of both armies into close and repeated combat.

The king, in contemplating so glorious a display of the valour and prowess of his troops, has commanded me to declare his royal approbation of the conduct of his whole army.

His majesty has commanded me to signify in the most marked and especial manner to you his gracious sense of your personal services on this ever-memorable occasion, not less displayed in the glorious result of the battle itself than in the consummate ability, valour, and military resources, with which the many difficulties of this arduous and protracted contest were met and provided for by your tried experience and judgment.

The conduct of lieutenant-general Sherbrooke, second in command, has entitled him to the king's entire approbation. His majesty has observed with satisfaction the manner in which he led on the troops to the charge with the bayonet, a species of attack which on all occasions so well accords with the dauntless character of British soldiers.

His majesty has noticed with the same gracious approbation the conduct of the several general

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Castlereagh to
lieut.-general
sir A. Welles-
ley.

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Lord viscount
Castlereagh to
lieut.-general
sir A. Welles-
ley.

and other officers. All have done their duty ; most of them have had occasion of eminently distinguishing themselves, the particular instances of which, as reported by you, have not escaped his majesty's attention.

In signifying to the officers of the army in public orders his majesty's approbation and thanks, it is his majesty's pleasure that they be extended in the most distinct and particular manner to the non-commissioned officers and men. On no occasion have they displayed with greater lustre the inestimable qualities which they possess as soldiers ; nor have they on any former occasion more nobly sustained the military character of the British nation.

In acknowledging the services of the brave army under your command, his majesty cannot refrain from those expressions of sorrow and regret with which his royal mind has been affected at observing the great number of gallant officers and men who have fallen in the battle of Talavera. His majesty's paternal feelings derive their best consolation on this occasion from the persuasion, that bravery so distinguished, and exertions so heroic, cannot but have obtained for their country the most important and lasting advantages ; and that, whilst the security and glory of his own empire has been confirmed by the achievements of his troops, his majesty trusts that their efforts will not prove unavailing, under the favour of Divine Providence, in defence of the rights and liberties of the Spanish nation.

His majesty has directed a medal to be distributed to the general and other officers commanding corps, in commemoration of the victory of Talavera; and has further commanded that his royal approbation of the services of his gallant troops in Spain should be published in general orders to the whole of the British army.

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August.

Lord viscount
Castlereagh to
lieut.-general
sir A. Welles-
ley.

I have, &c.

CASTLEREAGH.

Truxillo, Aug. 21, 1809.

My Lord,

I did not march from Jaraycejo till yesterday, not being able to arrange, till that moment, for the carriage of the sick of the army, to remove whom has taken every carriage and every mule we had, to carry the remnant of our reserve ammunition and the stores in the commissariat, and I have given over the ammunition to the Spanish general. We have not received any assistance of any description from the country, or from the agents of the Spanish government.

Sir A. Wellesley
to the marquis
Wellesley.

I have the honour to enclose to your excellency copies of letters which I have received from general Eguia, and copies of my answers; your excellency will observe, in general Eguia's letter to me on the 19th instant, a very injurious, improper, and unfounded assertion, that I made use of the want of provisions as a pretext for withdrawing from Spain, and that it was a false one, for that there was plenty

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August.Sir A. Wellesley
to the marquis
Wellesley.

of provisions for the army ; while I assured your excellency that on that very day the troops in my camp at Jaraycejo received only three-quarters of a pound of flour, and the cavalry and other horses of the army no forage excepting what they could pick up.

Until this insulting assertion was withdrawn, it was impossible for me to continue my correspondence with general Eguia, after I should have replied to his letter, which I hope I did with the temper which became my situation and character. Your excellency will observe, that in his reply to me he has either misunderstood, or has affected to misunderstand, the part of his former letter to which I referred ; and he has, in fact, left the charge of making use of a false pretext where it stood ; and I have, therefore, given him no reply upon that or any other subject on which he has addressed me.

Your excellency will likewise find an insinuation of the same kind in a letter from M. Calvo, dated the 19th instant, of which, and of my answer of the 20th, I enclose copies. These letters contain nearly the substance of a conversation I had with M. Calvo on the evening of the 19th ; and I assure your excellency, that at the moment M. de Calvo was writing his letter from Truxillo, stating the contents of the magazine at that place (on which statement he founded his insinuation, that I was withdrawing from Spain upon a false pretext), lieutenant-colonel Waters delivered to me a return of the

contents of the magazine, made up to the evening of the 19th, from which it appeared that it did not contain a sufficiency to feed the British troops for even one day ; and, if the magazines had contained a sufficiency of food, there were no means of transport to remove it to the position which the troops occupied.

Your excellency will recollect, that, in my correspondence with general Cuesta and with general Eguia, I stated the difficulty of settling any arrangement for the division of the magazine to be formed at Truxillo, in proportion to the strength of the two armies, because probably both armies, but certainly the Spanish army, would draw provisions from other quarters, which provisions could not go through the magazine ; to which answers were given, calling upon me to rely upon the honour and good faith with which the arrangement to be made should be carried into execution.

I now beg to refer you to the enclosed letter (of which I have the original in my possession) from the alcalde of Guadaloupe to Mr. commissary Downie, that he had received the direction of M. de Calvo, which he had obeyed, to send to Mesa d'Ibor, the head-quarters of the Spanish army, the provisions which Mr. Downie had ordered, and had been provided for the British army, to be sent to the magazine at Truxillo.

This is the honour and good faith with which the arrangement respecting the magazine at Truxillo

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Wellesley.

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Sir A. Wellesley
to the marquis
Wellesley.

was to be carried into execution, and this M. de Calvo is the gentleman in whose assurances I was to place confidence (as if I had not already gone far enough in confidence in the assurances of the agents of the Spanish government) that all the contents of the magazine at Truxillo should be given to the British troops, to the exclusion of the Spanish army, and that every thing which the army required, of every description, was on the road from Seville.

I find that it is intended to justify the Spanish government for the neglect of us by circulating a report that my complaints of want of supplies, of means of transport, and, I might have added, of the common attention and even of acts of humanity towards the army, and particularly the wounded, were mere pretexis. This plan has been carried into execution so far as that M. Lagano de Torres, the Spanish superintendent attached to this army, declared publicly yesterday, that he could prove that the British army, instead of wanting food, had received double rations ever since it arrived in Spain; and yet this same gentleman has expressed to me, in the most indignant terms, more than once, the shame he felt, as a Spaniard, on account of the manner in which we were treated, and the privations we were made to endure, which expressions he acknowledged this day. These reports and insinuations against me may do very well for the people of Seville; but the British army will not soon forget the treatment it has received; and I know

there is not a general officer in it, and I believe not an officer or soldier, who does not think that I should have neglected its interests, and even should have risked its existence, if I had delayed my departure for another day. I have the honour to enclose a copy of my despatch of this date to the secretary of state.

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Sir A. Wellesley
to the marquis
Wellesley.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c. &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

P. S.—By letter from marshal Beresford, I find that he also has been distressed for provisions. He informs me that the marquis de Romana was still at Corunna on the 5th instant.

P. S.—I beg leave to draw your excellency's attention to a fact which has occurred here this day. Your excellency will observe that M. de Calvo boasts in his letter of the 19th instant that he had here, at command, means of transport to carry provisions to the British army and its detachments not less than 30 miles from hence, and the quantity not less than 100,000 pounds in weight daily. Some sick had been sent here from Jaraycejo, who had not been considered in the arrangement made for the removal of the sick; and six carts were to remove them, which were required last night from M. Lagano de Torres, another deputy from the junta, and living with M. Calvo. These six carts have not been given, and I have removed these sick in the best manner I could. Just to shew your lord-

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Sir A. Wellesley
to the marquis
Wellesley.

ship the difference of the manner in which we are treated in Portugal, I mention, that general Leith, having heard by accident that our wounded were going to Elvas, prepared to receive them; and the preparations for the hospital were actually made, unsolicited, before the officer who was charged to make them arrived with my letter to general Leith, to announce my wish to establish the hospital at Elvas.

In the same manner I must mention that stores, for which the orders did not reach Lisbon till the 12th, will be at Elvas on the 26th, and yet Lisbon is further from the army than Seville is, and the means of transport in Portugal not half what they are in Spain.

Seville, Aug. 22, 1809.

Sir,

Marquis Wel-
lesley to sir A.
Wellesley.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch dated the 18th August, which I communicated to M. de Garay, immediately after it had reached me; and yesterday evening I presented the note, of which a copy is enclosed in this despatch. Although M. de Garay and his government must have been prepared to expect the early notification of your return to Portugal, from every communication which I had made since my arrival at Seville, and especially from your recent despatches (which I had regularly put into M. de Garay's hands), the most violent

emotions of alarm and consternation seemed to be excited by the near approach of an event so long foreseen.

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Marquis Wellesley to sir A. Wellesley.

M. de Garay declared to me, with expressions of the deepest sorrow and terror, that, if your army should quit Spain at this critical moment, inevitable and immediate ruin must ensue to this government, to whatever provinces remained under its authority, to the cause of Spain itself, and to every interest connected with the alliance so happily established between Great Britain and the Spanish nation.

These expressions were mixed with the most cordial sentiments of personal respect and gratitude for your great and splendid services in the cause of Spain, and with the highest admiration of the character and conduct of the British troops under your command.

M. de Garay proceeded to express the affliction of this government for the sufferings of your gallant army: he protested that great efforts had been made for supply; that this government was ready to adopt any plan for that object, which you or the British ambassador would suggest; that, at this moment, the most active exertions were actually in progress for the purpose of furnishing you with provisions, and the means of transport; that all the resources of these provinces were called forth for that sole end; and that he trusted that the exigencies of this moment were not so irresistible as not to admit of your remaining within

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August.Marquis Wel-
lesley to sir A.
Wellesley.

the Spanish frontier until you had ascertained the result of the efforts which this government had made for your supply since the period of my arrival at Seville.

The enclosed notes contain the substance of the observations which I offered in reply to M. de Garray's earnest solicitations. I found, however, that no argument which occurred to me produced the effects of diminishing the urgency of his entreaties; and I have ascertained that his sensations are in no degree more powerful than those of the government, and of every description of the people of Spain within this city and its vicinity.

I am also informed that the rumour of the return of the British army to Portugal had reached Cadiz some days ago, and had occasioned an equal degree of alarm in that quarter.

I am aware that these painful occurrences have not been unexpected in your view of the consequences of your retreat into Portugal, and that the absolute necessity of the case is the sole cause of a movement so entirely contrary to your inclination. I am also fully sensible not only of the indelicacy, but of the inutility, of attempting to offer to you any opinion of mine in a situation where your own judgment must be your best guide, and where no useful suggestions could arise in my mind which must not already have been anticipated by your own experience, comprehensive knowledge, and ardent zeal for the public welfare.

Viewing, however, so nearly, the painful consequences of your immediate retreat into Portugal, I have deemed it to be my duty to submit to your consideration the possibility of adopting an intermediate plan, which might combine some of the advantages of your return into Portugal without occasioning alarm in Spain, and without endangering the foundation of the alliance between this country and Great Britain.

Under this impression I have delivered the note (No. 3) to M. de Garay, and I request your favourable attention to that note, and to the enclosures which it contains.

I am inclined to hope that this government will adopt the plan proposed for the improvement of the supply and means of transport of your army, and that, in the mean time, every possible effort will be made to diminish the pressure of your present distress, until the principles of the proposed plan can be brought into full operation.

It is to be hoped, that, in the position proposed for your army, the supplies which you have provided in Portugal would be within your reach.

But it would be vain to urge these considerations beyond the extent in which they may be approved by your judgment. It will be sufficient for me to receive an early intimation of your opinion, and to be enabled to state it distinctly to this government, which looks to your decision, on the present occa-

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Marquis Wellesley to sir A. Wellesley.

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Marquis Wel-
lesley to sir A.
Wellesley.

sion, as the final determination of its fate, and of the existence of the Spanish nation.

That decision, I am persuaded, will be founded on the same principles of wisdom, justice, and public spirit, which have already obtained the respect, esteem, and confidence of the Spanish nation; and it will be my duty to endeavour to satisfy this government (whatever may be the exigency of the crisis) that no change has taken place in the sentiments or motives of action which have so cordially engaged their affection and admiration.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed)

WELLESLEY.

Here follow the enclosures:—

Seville, Aug. 21, 1809.

Sir,

Marquis Wel-
lesley to M. de
Garay.

In my note of the 12th instant I submitted to your excellency my desire to be permitted to state to you the plan which it might be necessary to adopt for providing the British army in Spain with the means of supply and movement.

Before I could attempt to suggest such a plan, it was requisite that I should know, with some degree of precision, the arrangements which had already been made by the government of Spain for these important objects, and the result of those arrangements.

This knowledge alone could enable me to determine the measures from which success might be

expected, or those from which failure was to be apprehended.

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August.

The documents which I have received this day from your excellency, compared with sir A. Wellesley's letters, have afforded me a clear view of the real causes of the distress which has checked the operations of the British army in the full career of its glory, and has at length compelled it to fall back on the supplies provided in Portugal.

Marquis Wellesley to M. de Garay.

From these papers it appears that the government, at considerable intervals of time, has issued orders to different officers and public authorities to provide supplies for the army. But it does not appear that the necessary means have been employed to enforce and secure the execution of those orders, or to ascertain, in due season, to what extent they had been executed, in what respects they had failed, or what were the causes either of their total failure or of their partial success.

No magazines or regular depots of provisions have been established under persons properly qualified to superintend the collection and distribution of provisions, and to make regular returns of their proceedings to the British general, as well as to the Spanish government.

No regular and stated means of transport or movement have been attached to the army, or to magazines, for the purpose of moving supplies from place to place; nor have any persons been regularly appointed to conduct and superintend convoys

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lesley to M. de
Garay.

under the direction of the general commanding the army.

No system of sufficient efficacy has been adopted for drawing forth from the rich and abundant provinces the resources which might have been applied, by a connected chain of magazines, under due regulations, to relieve the local deficiency of those countries in which the army might be compelled to act.

Accordingly the result of the well-intentioned but inefficient zeal of the officers of government has been totally inadequate to the exigencies of the occasion.

The supplies of the various articles enumerated in the returns which your excellency has done me the honour to communicate to me is very unequal to the wants of the army, especially in those articles which include the means of movement.

But I must observe to your excellency that even these inadequate supplies have not reached the objects of their stated destination, and that the British army, in point of fact, has derived no benefit whatever from any part of the orders described in the papers which I have the honour of receiving from your excellency.

The failure of these orders, issued with so sincere a desire of aiding the efforts of the British army in the general cause, precludes all rational hope of better success under the same defective system.

Your excellency will, therefore, understand the

considerations which prevented sir A. Wellesley from confiding the safety of his gallant troops to the result of measures, which, however amicable and sincere in their principle, had been proved by fatal experience to be entirely fruitless in their consequences, and therefore utterly insufficient to secure to this arm the means of continuing beyond the reach of those supplies which he had provided in Portugal.

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Marquis Wellesley to M. de Garay.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) WELLESLEY.

Seville, Aug. 21, 1809.

Sir,

Since I had the honour of addressing your excellency on the 12th instant, relative to the defective condition of the supplies and means of transport of the British army under sir A. Wellesley, I have continually received the most afflicting intelligence of the increasing distress of those brave and meritorious troops.

Without attempting to doubt the exertions of this government, I am deeply concerned to inform your excellency that they have hitherto proved entirely fruitless.

On the 18th instant, sir Arthur Wellesley informs me that the British army was without bread for that day. The cavalry was also without forage, which defect, I am grieved to inform your excellency, was in a great degree to be ascribed to the

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Marquis Wel-
lesley to M. de
Garay.

interception, by the Spanish cavalry, of the supplies of forage provided, under sir Arthur Wellesley's orders, for the British troops:

Sir Arthur Wellesley further informs me, that a month has now elapsed since he declared, in a letter to general Cuesta, that, if the British army was not supplied with the means of transport and with provisions, not only it could not co-operate in any forward movement beyond the river Alberche, but that it could not remain in Spain; and general Cuesta assured sir A. Wellesley that he despatched a copy of that letter to the supreme central junta.

In the course of that month, if proper means had been adopted, supplies might certainly have been forwarded to the British army from the most distant part of Andalusia; but sir A. Wellesley declares that he has not received a mule, or a cart, or an article of provision of any description, under any order given or arrangement made by the government; and sir A. Wellesley most solemnly assures me, that, since the 22d of July, the horses of the artillery and cavalry have not received three regular deliveries of barley, and the infantry have not received ten days' bread. Under these circumstances sir A. Wellesley states that the British army cannot remain in Spain, and he has requested me to give notice to the Spanish government that he is about to withdraw the British army into Portugal.

I had the honour of communicating to your excellency sir A. Wellesley's letter on this painful

subject last night, immediately after I had received it; and I am satisfied that your excellency will do me the justice to admit that I have not failed to make the most unreserved communications to your excellency, respecting the condition of the army, since the moment of my arrival at Seville.

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August.

Marquis Wellesley to M. de Garay.

It is further my duty to represent to your excellency that sir A. Wellesley expresses no doubt that the government has given orders that his army should be properly supplied; but he observes, "That mere orders are not sufficient; that, with a view to bring the contest with France to a favourable result, the labour and services of every man and of every beast in the country should be employed in the support of the army; and that they should be so classed and arranged, as not only to secure obedience to the orders of the government, but regularity and efficiency in the performance of the services required from them. Magazines might then with ease be formed, and transported wherever circumstances might require that armies should be stationed; but, as we are now situated, 50,000 men are collected upon a spot which cannot afford subsistence for 10,000 men, and no means exist of sending to a distance to supply the local deficiency." Sir A. Wellesley further remarks that the supreme central junta has also issued orders to supply the deficiency of means of transport, as well as of provisions; but, from inadequate arrangements, no persons obey these orders; and, if the British army had

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lesley to M. de
Garay.

attempted to remain in the position which it lately occupied, it must have perished before the proposed supplies could have reached it.

Under all these circumstances I trust your excellency will perceive that sir A. Wellesley did not determine to fall back on his supplies in Portugal until the necessity of his situation became absolutely irresistible.

Your excellency will observe that the British general has stated, without reserve, his sentiments respecting the defective arrangement of the military resources of Spain, which has occasioned this severe calamity to the interests of the alliance. In the spirit of friendship, and for the common benefit of the great cause in which we are engaged, I submit sir A. Wellesley's remarks to the serious consideration of the Spanish government. Availing myself of this occasion to repeat my sentiments of high respect and esteem,

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

(Signed) WELLESLEY.

Seville, Aug. 21, 1809.

Sir,

Marquis Wel-
lesley to M. de
Garay.

I have the honour to enclose for your excellency's consideration the suggestions which have occurred to me for the improvement of the system of movement and supply of the British army employed in Spain.

The principles on which this plan is founded are

equally applicable to the condition of the Spanish army, and the same principles will apply, at any time, to any positions which the armies may occupy, either in the event of their retiring upon a system of defence, or of their advancing for active operations.

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Marquis Wellesley to M. de Garay.

I take the liberty, at your excellency's repeated solicitations, of earnestly recommending the immediate and active adoption of this plan.

I have added a paper containing some propositions for occupying a new defensive position upon the banks of the Guadiana.

It is impossible for me positively to enforce, or even to assure your excellency that sir Arthur Wellesley will adopt, the propositions contained in that paper; but the acknowledged zeal of that distinguished officer for the success of the Spanish cause, and his transcendent exertions in the defence of the independence of Spain, leave no doubt that he will readily accept any proposition which can provide for the safety of Spain without exposing the British army to the horrors of famine and disease.

If, therefore, it should be agreeable to the supreme central junta to adopt without delay the plans enclosed in this letter, and commence the execution of these plans with activity and vigour, I will despatch an express to sir Arthur Wellesley to-morrow with these papers; and I will recommend the whole plan to his favourable consideration,

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Marquis Wellesley to M. de Garay.

provided he shall be of opinion that my suggestions do not endanger the existence of the British army, for which important object it is my duty to provide; and I am satisfied that it never can be the inclination of the Spanish government to expose the British army to destruction, without any prospect of honour or advantage to the common cause.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

Aug. 21, 1809.

Copy of a plan for the British army taking up a position upon the left bank of the Guadiana.

If the Spanish and British armies should retire from the positions which they at present occupy, they might take up a position on the left bank of the Guadiana, from Villaneuva de la Serena, nearly to Badajoz.

If the British army occupied Merida as an advanced post, and stationed their right at Almendra-lio, extending their left towards Badajoz, perhaps Portugal would be as effectually covered by that position as by the occupation of Elvas; at the same time, that, by occupying this position, Seville would be protected, and a firm *point d'appui* would be given to the left of the Spanish army, which should, in that case, be cantoned in the towns of Medellin, Don Beneto, and Villaneuva de la Serena.

This position of the armies would immediately facilitate their means of subsistence, under the plan proposed, as the country which they would occupy is abundant, and consequently the distance of

transport short. Before the armies can have consumed the existing produce of the country it is to be hoped the magazines at Monasterio and Sta. Ollala, according to the plan proposed, will be in a state amply to supply all the wants of both armies.

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Copy of a plan for the British army taking up a position upon the left bank of the Guadiana

Another advantage to be derived from the positions proposed would be, that the right of the English and the left of the Spanish army would be too far separated to allow of any dissensions respecting forage, or supplies of any kind.

But, in order to give full effect to every part of this plan, the general commanding the Spanish army should be positively ordered to conform, in every respect, to such instructions as he might receive from sir A. Wellesley; and should be directed to occupy such positions, and to pursue such a plan, either of offence or defence, as sir A. Wellesley may propose.

Aug. 21, 1809.

To enable the English army to recommence offensive operations, it is absolutely necessary that it should possess effective and ready means of movement.

Plan to enable the British army to procure the means of movement.

The means of subsisting an army in the field depend on the means of transport. If the power of movement should fail, all offensive operations must of necessity cease; and it becomes difficult even to maintain a defensive position.

To an army of 25,000 men, in this country,

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should be attached one thousand mules and a hundred carts.

This will provide for the transport of the hospital stores, military chests, and five days' rations of biscuit, rice, and bacon. But these means of transport are not to be considered as forming part of the other train necessarily employed in conducting the supplies of grain, biscuit, wine, brandy, &c. &c. from the magazine to the army.

In the present position of the British and Spanish armies in Estremadura, two lines of magazines might be formed.

The depôts nearest the army should be collected at Villa Nueva de la Serena, Don Benito, Almedralijo, and Asauchal. They should be formed of flour, biscuit, rice, bacon, barley, oats, wine, and brandy. The part of the country in which these places are situated is equal to supply the magazines.

The means of transport also might be collected in that province without difficulty, partly in mules, and partly in carts.

The second depôts might be formed at Monasterio and Sta. Ollala; and they should be entirely supplied, both in provisions and means of transport, from Seville and its vicinity.

The town of Seville is famous for its biscuit: it might therefore be convenient to make Monasterio and Sta. Ollala the principal depôts for biscuit, as well as for wine and brandy.

But it will be in vain to establish magazines, and procure the means of conveying supplies to the army, if the convoys of provisions be not placed under the direction of military officers, who shall be made answerable for their regular and punctual delivery.

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A military officer, to be named by the British general, assisted by six or eight commissaries, should be at the head of each line of depôts.

The mules and carts employed in the transport of provisions should be divided into brigades, and each brigade should be escorted by an officer, and by a sufficient number of men to protect it from insult. These officers and men should of course be under the command of the officer at the head of the magazines.

In the town of Almendralijo, and in the neighbourhood, there are considerable quantities of wheat and barley.

It is absolutely necessary that this supply should be secured for the use of the army, and conveyed within the line of the positions which it is likely to occupy.

Immediate means should be taken for purchasing this grain, under a requisition which should compel its delivery at proper prices.

The money should be paid immediately on delivery of the grain.

Returns should be collected of all the articles of provision existing in Estremadura, with a view to

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purchase and bring within the same line whatever may be necessary for the use of the army.

Bread, rice, and barley, are the articles of which the army are at present in most need.

Money must be sent forward, to make the necessary purchases.

Seville, and even Cadiz, might furnish means of transport, and for this purpose every sacrifice of private inconvenience must be required.

The horses, mules, and carriages of all individuals, should be considered to belong to the war department, until they shall have performed a certain number of journeys to the army.

This demand, however, should be exclusive of the supply required for attaching to the army brigades of carts and mules.

The whole plan might then be connected in the following manner :—At Cadiz, all the articles, both of provision and transport, which could be collected in that vicinity, and even from Africa, if necessary, should be placed under the direction of a proper officer, to be approved by the British ambassador. Cadiz should furnish the means of conveying these articles to Seville.

At Seville a similar arrangement should be made for collecting and distributing the provision ; and Seville should furnish the means of removing these articles to Sta. Ollala and Monasterio, where the magazines nearest to Seville will be established.

These magazines also must be furnished with their

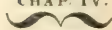
separate means of transport, from this line to Asau-chal, Almendralijo, &c. where a similar establishment is to be made, with separate means of conveyance.

The line of communication with the army being once determined, regular halting places should be fixed for the convoys; and provision should be made at each of those halting places for the men and beasts employed in the convoys.

Regular daily returns should be made to the British general, and to the government of Seville, of the state of each magazine, and of each convoy. These returns should contain a list of the nature and quantity of each article convoyed, and of the time of departure and arrival of each convoy, together with the name of the officer commanding the escort, who shall be rendered responsible for the due delivery of the articles to be convoyed. A proper system of rewards should be established, under the direction of the British general, for those persons who should distinguish themselves in the collection of the articles required for the magazines, and in the safe conveyance of them to their several points of destination. The rewards should be given on the spot, and should not be deferred to any remote period of time, or rendered liable to any contingency.

If this plan should be approved, lists can be made out immediately of the whole establishment necessary for carrying it into effect.

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Sir A. Wellesley to the marquis Wellesley.

Miajadas, Aug. 22, 1809.

My Lord,

I have this day had the honour of receiving your excellency's despatches of the 20th instant.

My former letters will have apprized your excellency that I was aware that marshal Ney's corps was gone to Talavera. In respect to the intelligence from general Venegas, it appears to me that the enemy have no intention to make any progress, in that quarter, beyond the foot of the mountains. If they entertained any intention of proceeding farther, they would have gone in greater strength.

However, whatever may be the enemy's design in that quarter, my former despatches must have convinced your excellency that I was unable to co-operate in any movement, in this quarter, which should have for its object to draw the enemy from La Mancha, or, indeed, in any other movement of any description, excepting that which I am now making; having no provisions, no stores, no means of transport, being overloaded with sick, the horses of the cavalry being scarcely able to march, or those of the artillery to draw their guns, and the officers and soldiers being worn down by want of food, and privations of every description.

The Spanish ministers cannot have averted to what I have repeated to them through different channels frequently, since the 17th of last month, viz. that, if I was not supplied with what I required,

not only I could not co-operate in any forward movement, but must withdraw from Spain ; or they could not give credit to the existence of the wants of the British army ; or they must believe me to be so exceedingly desirous of serving them, that, whatever might be the consequences to the army, I should make it march and fight as long as two men could remain together.

Nobody feels more sorely disappointed and hurt than I do that so little attention has been paid to the demands which I have frequently made ; and, whatever may be the consequences of the steps which I have been compelled to take, I am in no manner responsible for them.

I have now proceeded three marches in the rear from Jaraycejo since the 20th, and have not met a supply of any description on its way to the army, so that, if I had remained at Jaraycejo so long, it would have been the 26th before the army would have received any of the supplies from Seville ; and yet M. de Calvo undertook that the army should be fully supplied on every day after the 19th, and was much surprised that I had no confidence in his promises of the arrival of supplies, respecting the progress of which upon the road, or even their having quitted Seville, he had no information.

I have the honour to be, &c.

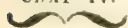
(Signed)

A. WELLESLEY.

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Sir A. Wellesley to the marquis Wellesley.

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CHAP. IV.*Seville, Aug. 24th, 1809.*1809.
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lesley to
Mr secretary
Canning.

Sir,

The last despatch which I had the honour to address to you was dated on the 15th instant. Since that period of time my attention has been principally engaged by the continual distresses of the army under the command of sir A. Wellesley.

The enclosed letters from sir A. Wellesley (under dates from the 13th to the 18th inclusive) contain the details of that calamity, and of its unfortunate consequences, which have ultimately reduced him to the necessity of withdrawing towards the frontier of Portugal, according to the declarations which he had repeatedly made to the Spanish general, to Mr. Frere, and to me, and which have been regularly communicated to this government.

From sir A. Wellesley's letters you will perceive, that, notwithstanding the promises and professions of this government and of its officers, the sufferings of the British army had not been alleviated from the 12th to the 18th instant, that no satisfactory proposition for the relief of the wants of the troops had been offered to sir Arthur Wellesley by the Spanish civil or military officers in the vicinity of his army, and that he entertained no expectation of seasonable relief from any effort which the supreme junta had engaged to make, in consequence of my applications to that authority.

Sir Arthur Wellesley's letter of the 18th of August, announcing his positive determination to withdraw into Portugal, and requesting that I would give notice of that determination to this government, reached me on the 20th, in the evening, when I communicated the original to M. de Garay.

Although the notification which I made to M. de Garay, on the 20th instant, must have been expected, it was received by him with the strongest indications of alarm; and I had every reason to believe that the rumour of the return of the British army into Portugal had excited a general sensation of a similar description. Attempts had also been made, with some success, to prejudice the public opinion with respect to the real causes of the retreat of our army, which were stated to be, not any deficiencies in our means of supply or of movement, but certain political considerations, inconsistent with the security and honour of Spain, and with the good faith of Great Britain.

Rumours were circulated of demands made in his majesty's name for the cession of Cadiz, of the Havannah, and the island of Cuba, and for changes in the form of this government, as preliminary conditions to the further operations of the British troops in Spain; and it was suggested that the rejection of these conditions by this government had occasioned the retreat of sir Arthur Wellesley's army.

It is unnecessary to inform you that I have

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required nothing from Spain, excepting subsistence for the brave army employed in her defence.

M. de Garay and his government possess abundant proofs of the severe and urgent distress of the British army ; and they know (according to M. de Garay's repeated admission in his conferences with me) that sir Arthur Wellesley, with the gallant army under his command, was animated by the most ardent zeal for the completion of his glorious successes, and that he never would have fallen back upon the resources of Portugal while any prospect remained of obtaining subsistence in Spain.

But a strict observation of the proceedings of the junta, and of its officers, has convinced me that I had formed too sanguine an expectation of their exertions, and too favourable an opinion of their sincerity.

This government is conscious of the real cause of the distresses of our troops. Public opinion has loudly, and I fear too justly, imputed this calamity to the weakness or negligence of the executive power in Spain ; no insinuations, therefore, have been discountenanced by the government, which might tend to avert from themselves the indignation generally excited by the unfavourable issue of a campaign commenced with such auspicious hopes.

On the 20th and 21st instant, the opinions of M. de Garay, of this government, and of the public within these provinces, certainly tended to establish a general apprehension of immediate danger to this

quarter of Spain from the French forces, in the event of the retreat of the British army to Portugal. The judgment of sir A. Wellesley, however, did not confirm this apprehension. He thought it improbable that the enemy would venture with his present force to advance into Andalusia; and, as far as the designs of the enemy could be conjectured from recent movements, it did not appear to be his immediate object to pursue offensive operations in the southern provinces.

But, although these opinions of the intentions and power of the enemy may prove just and rational, they have not calmed the popular apprehension; and the prevalent sentiment (not discouraged by the government) appears to be, that the British army, without necessity, is about to relinquish the protection of Spain, in a crisis of imminent danger.

In this distracted state of the public mind, and in the confusion and consternation of the government, it appeared to me to be my duty to endeavour to suggest some plan which might check the rising spirit of discontent and alarm, and might confirm the principles of the British alliance, without exposing our army to further peril.

Accordingly, on the 21st instant, I addressed to M. de Garay the notes of which I have the honour to enclose copies; and on the 22d I forwarded to sir Arthur Wellesley a despatch, of which also a copy is enclosed.

In the notes addressed to M. de Garay I endea-

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See ante, 269,
&c.

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voured to explain the nature and causes of the distress of our troops ; to suggest to this government a plan for better securing the supply and movement of our army in Spain ; and (under the condition that this plan should be immediately carried into execution with celerity and vigour, and in the belief that sufficient exertion had already been made for the intermediate relief of the British army) I proposed to submit to sir A. Wellesley the expediency of occupying a position in Spain, from which he might communicate with Portugal, and, at the same time, might try the result of the promised efforts of this government for the subsistence of his troops.

The despatch to sir A. Wellesley submits these several plans to his consideration, without attempting to press them upon his judgment beyond the limits of his own opinion.

M. de Garay, and this government, eagerly adopted that part of the plan which suggested the detention of the British army in Spain, and repeated the most positive assurances of the exertions already made, and those intended, for the seasonable supply of the army. But, in the mean while, my confidence in those assurances was diminished by the communications which I received from sir Arthur Wellesley, whose letters (of which copies are enclosed) of the 21st and 22d instant announced to me not only the increasing distress of his troops, but the proceedings of M. de Calvo

(a member of the junta, especially commissioned to superintend the supplies of the army), tending to aggravate the increasing distress, and even to cast suspicion on the sincerity of the Spanish government.

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Marquis Wellesley to
Mr. secretary
Canning.

I take the liberty of recommending the whole of sir A. Wellesley's correspondence to your particular attention. It contains a full and detailed statement of the extent and cause of his distress; and exhibits a view of the state of the country, and of the temper and conduct of the Spanish civil and military authorities, which cannot fail to be useful in forming any plan of future operations in Spain.

His lordship's
opinion of the
preceding documents.

During the period of my residence at Seville I have received several notes from M. de Garay, containing, by order of the supreme central junta, the most strenuous exhortations for the immediate advance of the British troops against the enemy; and, in our conferences, he has advised the expulsion of the French beyond the Pyrenees. I have also enclosed translations of these notes, according to the order of their dates.

While the British troops remained destitute of the means of transport, and of the most important articles of supply, it was at least superfluous to propose active operations; and the letters of sir A. Wellesley afford sufficient evidence of the degree of assistance which our troops might have expected from the Spanish generals and armies, in any forward movement.

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Marquis Wel-
lesley to
Mr. secretary
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I have not attempted to expostulate with M. de Garay on these unpleasant topics; although I have represented to him, in the most unreserved manner, the inability of our army to execute the projects recommended by the junta. M. de Garay, however, is compelled, by the orders of the junta, to repeat to me, in the course of every day, the same exhortations, expressed nearly in the same words.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) WELLESLEY.

Merida, Aug. 24, 1809.

My Lord,

Sir A. Welles-
ley to the mar-
quis Wellesley.

I had the honour of receiving last night, at Medellin, your excellency's despatch, dated the 22d instant.

From all that I have heard of the state of the government at Seville, I am not surprised that they should have been astonished and alarmed when they had heard that I had at last determined to adopt the measures which I had so frequently informed them I should adopt.

Although I was desirous to avoid, as long as possible, to withdraw into Portugal, and certainly remained in the position upon the Tagus as long as it was practicable, and longer probably than was consistent with the anxiety which I have always felt for the welfare and comfort of the troops placed under my command; I am of opinion, that, having been compelled to withdraw, it becomes a question

for serious consideration whether any circumstances should now induce me to remain in Spain, and to hold out hopes of further co-operation with the Spanish army. I ought or ought not to separate from them. I beg to lay my ideas upon this point before your excellency ; and to request the aid of your superior judgment, to enable me to decide upon it in the manner which will be most beneficial to the national interests.

When the two armies were joined, this implied engagement existed between them, that, as long as the operations were conducted by mutual consent, they were to continue in co-operation.

I should not have considered myself justified in separating from the Spanish army unless Portugal should evidently have required the protection of the British army, or unless the Spanish army should have been under the necessity of adopting a line of operation, to follow which would separate me from Portugal ; or unless driven as I was to separate by necessity ; or unless the Spanish army had again behaved so ill, as a military body, as it did in its shameful flight from the bridge of Arzobispo.

I conceived this last case would have made it so notorious that it was necessary for me to separate, that I had determined it should induce a separation equally with the occurrence of any of the other three ; and I should have stated it broadly and fairly as my reason for withdrawing the British army from all communication with a body endowed with

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qualities, as soldiers, in a degree so far inferior to themselves.

Your excellency will observe that my conduct in continuing with the Spanish army would have been guided by a fair view of our reciprocal situation, and by a consideration of what they might consider an engagement to act with them, as long as it was consistent with the orders I had received to consider my army applicable to the defence of Portugal, with which orders the Spanish government are fully acquainted.

At the present moment, however, I have been compelled to separate from the Spanish army ; and the question now is, whether I shall place myself in co-operation with them again ?

The first point which I would wish your excellency to consider is the difference of reasoning, by which the decision of this question must be guided, from that which I above stated would have guided, and did in fact guide me in the decision on the other. In that case I considered the armies to be under an implied engagement to each other not to separate except on certain defined or easily definable grounds ; but in this case there is positively no engagement of any description ; there is none in the treaty between his majesty and the Spanish government ; there is none implied or expressed by me. Indeed the argument would lead the other way ; for, his majesty having offered the Spanish government the services of his army upon certain con-

ditions, the conditions were refused, and it must have been understood that his majesty would not give the aid of his army, and accordingly his majesty has never ordered, but has only permitted me to carry on such operations in Spain as I might think proper upon my own responsibility, and as ever consistent with the safety of Portugal.

The question then comes before me to be decided as a new one, whether I shall join in co-operation with the Spanish army again?

I must here take into consideration, as I did upon the first occasion, the objects of such co-operation, the means which exist of attaining these objects, and the risk which I shall incur of loss to my army, and of losing sight of Portugal, for the defence of which country the British army has been sent to the Peninsula.

The object held out in your excellency's despatch, and which I consider as only the first and immediate object (for I am convinced your excellency must look to offensive operations as soon as the means shall be prepared for them), is the defence of the Guadarama. Upon this point I must inform your excellency, that, in my opinion, the Guadarama is not to be defended by a weaker army against a stronger; it is fordable in very many places, and it affords no position that I know of; and the result of withdrawing the Spanish army from its present position to that which has been proposed to your

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ley to the mar-
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excellency for them would be to expose them to be defeated before I could assist them.

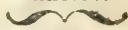
The Spanish army is at this moment in the best position in this part of the country, which they ought to hold against any force which can be brought against them, if they can hold any thing. As long as they continue in it, they cover effectually the passages of the Guadarama, which they would not cover by the adoption of any other position, and their retreat from it in case of accidents must always be secure; and there is no chance of their being attacked by superior numbers. I have reason to believe that Soult, as well as Ney, has passed through the mountains into Castille, and there remains only Mortier's corps and two divisions of Victor's in Estremadura, the total of which force cannot amount to 25,000 men. The subsistence of the Spanish army in their present position, particularly now that we have withdrawn, cannot be very difficult. Upon the whole, then, I recommend that they should remain in their present position as long as possible, sending away to Badajoz the bridge of boats which is still opposite to Almaraz.

According to this reasoning it does not appear to be necessary, and it is not very desirable, that the British army should be involved in the defence of the Guadarama; but it may be asked, is there no chance of resuming the offensive? In answer, I have to observe, that at present I see none; and

hereafter certainly none. Your excellency is informed of the history of the causes which led to the late change in our operations from the offensive, after a victory, to the defensive. The same causes would certainly exist if we were to recommence our operations. The French have as many troops as we have; indeed I am not certain that they are not now superior to us in numbers, as they are certainly, at least to the Spanish army, in discipline, and every military quality. Unless we could depend upon the troops employed to keep the passes of the mountains, we could not prevent the French corps in Castille from coming upon our rear; while those in Estremadura and La Mancha would be in our front; but I certainly can never place any reliance upon the Spanish troops to defend a pass, and I could not venture to detach from the British army British troops in sufficient numbers to defend the passes of Banos and Perales. Even if we could, however, by the defence of these passes, prevent the enemy from attacking us in the rear, we could not prevent him from penetrating by the passes of Guadarama or Avilla, and adding to the numbers in our front.

To this add, that there are no troops in the north of Spain which could be employed to make a diversion. Blake has lost his army; the marquis de Romana is still in Gallicia; and he cannot venture to quit the mountains, having neither cavalry nor artillery.

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CHAP. IV.



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August.

Sir A. Wellesley to the marquis Wellesley.

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Sir A. Welles-
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quis Wellesley.

The duque del Parque has very few troops, and, as he has shewn lately, he does not like to risk them at a distance from Ciudad Rodrigo. But I come now to another topic, which is one of serious consideration, and has considerable weight in my judgment upon this whole subject; and that is, the frequent, I ought to say constant and shameful, behaviour of the Spanish troops before the enemy. We in England never hear of their defeats and flights; but I have heard of Spanish officers telling of nineteen and twenty actions of the description of that at the bridge of Arzobispo, an account of which, I believe, has never been published.

Want of discipline in a part of the Spanish army.

In the battle of Talavera, in which the Spanish army, with very trifling exception, was not engaged, whole corps threw away their arms, and ran off in my presence, when they were neither attacked nor threatened with an attack; but frightened, I believe, by their own fire. I refer your excellency for evidence upon this subject to general Cuesta's orders, in which, after extolling the gallantry of his army in general, he declares his intention to decimate the runaways; an intention which he afterwards carried into execution. When these dastardly soldiers run away, they plunder every thing they meet; and, in their flight from Talavera, they plundered the baggage of the British army, which was at the moment bravely engaged in their cause.

I have found, upon inquiry and from experience, the instances of the misbehaviour of the Spanish

troops to be so numerous, and those of their good behaviour so few, that I must conclude that they are troops by no means to be depended upon; and then the question arises again, whether, being at liberty to join in co-operation with those troops or not, I ought again to risk the king's army? There is no doubt whatever that every thing that is to be done must be done by us, and certainly the British army cannot be deemed sufficiently strong to be the only acting efficient military body to be opposed to a French army not consisting of less than 70,000 men.

Upon every ground, therefore, of objects, means, and risk, it is my opinion that I ought to avoid to enter into any further co-operations with the Spanish armies; and that, at all events, your excellency should avoid to hold out to the government any hope that I would consent to remain within the Spanish frontiers with any intention of co-operating with the Spanish troops in future.

At the same time I see the difficulty in which the government may be placed. Their army may be seized with one of those panic terrors to which they are liable, and may run off, and leave every thing exposed to instant loss. To which I answer, that I am in no hurry to withdraw from Spain; I want to give my troops food and refreshment, and I shall not withdraw into Portugal, at all events, till I shall have received your excellency's sentiments upon what I have submitted to your judgment.

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Sir A. Wellesley to the marquis Wellesley.

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Sir A. Welles-
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If I should withdraw into Portugal, I shall go no further than the frontier (but for this I should not wish to engage); and I shall be so near, that the enemy will not like to venture across the Guadiana, unless he comes in very large force indeed, leaving me upon his flank and his rear. I shall, therefore, in effect, be as useful to the Spanish government within the Portuguese frontier as I should be in the position which has been proposed to your excellency; and, indeed, more useful, as I expect, the nearer I shall move to Portugal, the more efficient I shall become; at the same time that, by going within the Portuguese frontier, I clear myself entirely of the Spanish army, and should have an opportunity hereafter of deciding whether I will co-operate with them at all, in what manner, and to what extent, and under what condition, according to the circumstances of the moment.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

P. S.—Since writing the above, lieutenant-colonel O'Lawler has received a letter from general Eguia, stating that he has received orders from the government to retire upon Villa Nueva de la Serena, in consequence of the movement made by the troops under my command.

If he should retire so far, it will be necessary that he should fall back still farther to Monasterio, having no position upon the Guadiana.

I have also to observe to your excellency, that, even if I should remain in Spain, it will be impossible for me to take up the position which it has been proposed to your excellency that I should take up; as, in cases of the further retreat of the Spanish army, I should find it difficult to get into Portugal. Indeed, at all events, the best way for me to cover the Guadiana and Seville is by a position on the enemy's flank.

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Sir A. Wellesley to the marquis Wellesley.

Seville, Aug. 25, 1809.

Sir,

I have the honour to transmit to your excellency the arrangements made by the minister of war, with reference to the official notes, which your excellency was pleased to address to me on the 21st of this month. These arrangements have been made known to me by the secretary at that office in the following terms:—

Don Martine Garay to the marquis Wellesley.

In consequence of the royal order, which your excellency was pleased to communicate to me with the date of yesterday, to the intent that the section of war and the military junta should take into their consideration the notes which have been transmitted by the marquis Wellesley, relating to the establishment of the magazines for the subsistence of the armies, to the positions which it would be useful to take, and to the wish that the Spanish general should receive from sir A. Wellesley the suitable instructions, as well for the defensive

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as for offensive operations; they have been examined with all the consideration which the alliance and constant harmony between the two nations, together with the actual circumstances, can require.

The section and the military junta are firmly persuaded that it is the intention of our worthy allies to resume the offensive from the moment that the armies shall possess a secure subsistence, since the advantage of a hostile movement is well known, and does not require demonstration.

With this supposition the paper marked A. has been examined. It demonstrates the necessity of a regulation of provisions; and, as the ideas of the ambassador are much in conformity with those prescribed in the enclosed regulation, which had been already formed for the subsistence of armies in operation (the sole variation consisting in the mode of serving the magazines), the junta and section are of opinion that a copy of the said regulations should be transmitted to the marquis Wellesley, in order that his excellency, having seen it, may state the objections that occur to him; and for this purpose I enclose the said copy to your excellency. The section and the military junta are equally of opinion that the positions marked out in the paper B., viz., to place the armies on the left bank of the Guadiana, are well adapted for the purpose of maintaining the defensive, the troops occupying the ground from Villa Nueva de la Serena to Bada-

joz. They, however, conceive that such positions should be temporary, and limited to the moment when the armies shall have been supplied; since, when this point has been accomplished, it is absolutely necessary to move on the Tagus, for the purpose of carrying on active operations against the enemy. As it is expedient that, in that case, the armies should act in combination, and, for the same reasons, that each army should possess an imposing force, the section and military junta are of opinion that the Spanish army of Estremadura should be divided in the following manner, this arrangement being founded in the claim which sir A. Wellesley has merited to the entire confidence of our government by his eminent qualities of wisdom, activity, and valour, and by his superior attachment to the just cause; all these qualities he has displayed in the battle of Talavera.

1st. The command of the combined army shall be conferred on sir A. Wellesley. It shall be composed of the whole British force, and of 12,000 infantry, 2000 cavalry, and twelve pieces of cannon, from the Spanish army. This corps shall be commanded by a lieutenant-general, three marescales de campo, and a corresponding staff. The Spanish general shall consult with sir A. Wellesley on the political department and interior regulations of his regiments, and shall be under his orders in military operations.

2d. Experience has shown the necessity of strengthening the position of the Sierras, in order

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to anticipate any unfortunate occurrence: 6000 men of the remaining army in Estremadura shall come to Monasterio and Santa Ollala: the whole of the said army shall be incorporated with that of general Venegas when he moves forward. The many positions of Sierra Morena would thus be always protected, and the army would have a force sufficient for offensive operations, and for acting in combination with the troops of sir A. Wellesley.

The troops from Galicia, those which can be collected from the Asturias, together with those of marshal Beresford, shall also co-operate in combination; assuming the offensive or defensive, according to circumstances, against the troops of the enemy which have retired from Castille.

The supreme central and governing junta of the kingdom, being informed of the opinions of the section of war and of the military junta, has given its approbation to them; and by the royal order I make this known to your excellency, with an enclosure of the copy of the regulations of magazines. Your excellency will be pleased to examine them, and to give me notice of any objection you may find to carrying them into effect. His majesty, in the high confidence which he reposes in your excellency, entertains no doubt that you will omit nothing to contribute to that conformity with this plan, which so much confirms the unalterable harmony between his majesty and his allies.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) MARTIN DE GARAY.

August 25, 1809.

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1st. The stores of provisions should

be placed under the care of a minister of activity, zeal, and knowledge in the business ; and this minister of finance, or inspector, ought to have every information respecting the state of the magazines under his care, and to see that they are properly provided with every thing necessary for the good and punctual assistance of the troops, and that the storekeepers, and all those employed, execute faithfully his orders, entering into immediate communication with the intendant of the army, to whom he shall give accurate intelligence of any thing new or doubtful which may occur, and to which his attention may be necessary.

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Rules which ought to be observed by the minister of finance, the commissary, or inspector of provisions.

2d. He should be well acquainted with the quantity of provisions in each magazine, the points which are furnished by it, the troops stationed at those points, and what quantity of provisions may be necessary for their perfect supply ; for which purpose he should take care that the storekeeper of each respective magazine under his superintendence sends him a daily account, expressing what effects and funds may have been left of the day before, what has been received, distributed, and consumed on that day, and what may remain for the following (in the manner marked in No. 5) ; all which should be communicated likewise to the intendant of the army ; by which means the state of each magazine will be daily known, in order to the making such arrangements as may be expedient.

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3d. Every week (more or less, as may be convenient) a report should be drawn up, from the above statements, of the provisions distributed to the troops at each point; and from which report, which also should be sent to the intendant of the army, an estimate will be formed of the provisions necessary for each of the above-mentioned magazines, in order to their regular and exact supply.

4th. He should examine, as often as he may judge proper, whether there really exist the effects and money in each magazine which there ought to be, and the state of them.

5th. He should take care that the distributing storekeeper place frequently in the entry-book the produce of the sales, so that there never shall remain any considerable sum in their hands.

6th. Whenever the corps receive provisions without money, he will take care that it is made good at the end of every month, encouraging the corps to do the same.

7th. As being immediately at the head of this branch, he should have a list of every individual employed, of which there should be one in each magazine, expressive of their situation and pay.

8th. He should inspect the accounts of the pay and expenses of the magazines, whether monthly or weekly.

9th. He will take care that, in no case, there shall be a want of effects in the magazines, and that

they are of a good quality, and such as the troops cannot complain of.

10th. Care should also be taken to select convenient buildings for the magazines, dry, well aired, and with good floors, that the articles may not spoil or rot.

11th. It will be always proper in campaigns to value the houses taken for magazines; because often, upon an attack of the enemy, and a sudden retreat becoming necessary, it is expedient to burn the buildings and effects, which give rise to law-suits to make them good. The price of the rent should also be fixed; and, for the same reason, it is right to make a declaration of the state they are in, because, when the owners require them to be placed in the same, without such declaration, neither the state of the house is known, nor what is necessary to be done.

1st. Each storekeeper should keep two muster-books, properly numbered and dated. In the first he will set down (distinguishing provisions from other articles) whatever he may receive in his magazine, every line being on a separate sheet.

2d. He will carefully mark who sends the article, and who delivers it, and if it agree with the accounts sent in; and, if it should prove to contain more than is expressed therein, he will take charge of the overplus, marking it very accurately in the receipt at the bottom, and *vice versa* when there shall be less, giving instant notice of it to his im-

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Rules to be observed by the keepers of the magazines of provisions.

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mediate chief, in order to his taking the necessary steps in consequence.

3d. He will note in this book if the effects received came in carts or on horses, whether bargained for, or pressed, in order that the royal finance may not suffer; and, if he sends any thing back by the same conveyance, he will mark it in the bill.

4th. The following is the way to make the entries:—"Of such an article sent from such a place, "on such a day, by such a person, native of——, "in so many sacks, cloths, barrels, hampers, &c. "pressed, or bargained for." When these things are sent back, it is to be marked.

5th. This book must have as many lines as there are articles received, and at the last must have the following, "bacon, oil, salt fish, rice, pease, beans, "French beans, salt, wine, brandy, and vinegar;" these being articles of first necessity in a province where the army has nothing else to live upon.

SECT. II.

1st. In the second book he will set down the produce of the daily sales, making the same divisions under different heads, placing at the beginning of the margin the quantity of the articles, and carrying over the amount of what it may have fetched.

2d. Besides the heads already mentioned for the first, should be added to the date the following:—

“ Here should be marked such deliveries as may be made by order of the intendant or other minister of finance, including in the delivery the receipt of the person to whom it was made, which should be given in to the minister at the end of every month, in order that he may transmit it to the proper person to solicit the bill of payment, which he will keep, and before giving the receipt he will make the entry in his book.

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“ Articles delivered by superior orders.

“ Here should be put down, with their dates, whatever expenses may occur, and which are disbursed by order of the above minister, for the repair of the magazine, hire of the same, accidental jobs, embargoes of wine and brandy to refresh the troops, which often takes place in advancing, attacking, retreating, on account of bad nights, stormy weather, or from any other motion, when the general shall please to order it ; and lastly the monthly pay which may be earned by persons employed. In all these documents the *vû bon* of the above minister must be obtained before he collects them and puts them by.

“ Extraordinary disbursements and expenses.

“ Under this head should be marked the sacks, the cloths, bundles, bags, barrels, hampers, or any other articles not returned, but detained to keep the articles in, as well as those which, not being wanted, were sent empty, with the horses or carts agreed for, which return without a load or capital. Whenever this is done, a bill should be drawn out, saying that they are sent to the person pointed out

“ Utensils which are sent.

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by their head, which bill, with this person's receipt, should be returned to him; and, if compliance is refused in this particular, notice should be given of it to the above head or chief, in order that the intendant, being made acquainted with it, may enforce its execution. Before he sends it, a bargain should be made, expressive of the name and habitation of the person charged to convey it; and, when returned to him, he should put it with the other monthly documents, as it ought to accompany the bill.

"Sending provisions to
other magazines."

"Under this should be set down such articles as are sent by an order of the intendant or of the commander of the troops to any other magazines or points where the case required it, distinguishing the different sorts, making out a bill with the name of the person who is to convey them, and expressing what kind they are of, marking it arithmetically in the margin with the number of sacks, barrels, &c.; and, collecting together these bills, together with the receipts, he should file and keep them, as they are to serve for his justification when the accounts are settled."

3. Besides these two master books, a monthly ledger should be kept, an annual account-book, and an account current, all with the rubric of their immediate chief.

4. The first should consist of five or six sheets of common paper, where will be marked down the various deliveries which may be made him, and

those which he may make daily himself, and should be entitled 'Ledger of such a Month and Date.' The daily amount of these will be transferred to the respective master books, and should be kept till the accounts are passed, in case any kind of doubt should arise. If, by mistake, any false entry should be made in this ledger, it may be rectified by a marginal note; but no scratching out should in any case be admitted.

5. The second should be a little annual account-book, confined to the money-chest, and might be labelled 'The Produce of this Magazine.' In it should be entered the daily produce of the sale; and monthly the quantity he may have delivered on a superior order; the extraordinary expenses which may occur, and the pay of the persons employed; which quantity he should balance by an account of receipt and expenditure, so that the state of the funds may always be known.

6. The third should be a book of about twenty-five leaves, where should be entered daily, and with the same distinction, the provisions which may be distributed to the officers and dependents of the army at the fixed price. It should be kept with the same accuracy as the master books, as it should be sent in with them for the better justification of the accounts, and its title should be, 'Book of Provisions furnished to the Officers and Dependents, beginning with such a date or circumstance,' &c.

7. If provisions are distributed without money

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to the army, a large book should be kept, where should be distinctly marked the kind of articles, the regiments, squadrons, battalions, parties, &c. what are drawn daily, noting the quantity in the same way as in the master book, and taking particular care that no receipt is lost.

These will not be admitted if not presented according to the order of the superior who directed them to be given without funds; and, when any corps shall account for the amount of provisions furnished without money, the contract or settlement should be made with this book open, and the daily receipts by which they were made, thus balancing the amounts, so that no one can suffer.

He will deliver all the receipts, and collect one general one, which shall express in gross the quantity of provisions and money the whole amount to, and that they are satisfied, and shall transfer it to the master book in the same way as if it had only been verified in that act, putting them with the rest which he shall distribute the same day with money, marking in the above book at the end of each line that the corps is satisfied; or he will include the produce in the daily statements, and in the little book, but not the provisions, because they should be given with the daily supply without money.

8. If there should be any magazine dependent on him, he will oblige him to give in the account weekly, which should be accompanied by the re-

ceipts which he may have distributed to the troops, and the money which the sale may have produced is to be marked in his book, as if it was distributed by him, but remarking that the articles were sold by the sub-storekeepers, which will be marked down in the book of daily produce.

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The following is the way to keep the account with the subaltern:—They inform him of what has been sent in the eight former days, accompanied by the books and bills, as vouchers. Such parts are admitted as appear, by the receipts, have been distributed on these same days; the amount is drawn, and the remainder is accounted for with him. If the sub-magazine is established in any encampment, or any point which may endanger it being attacked by the enemy, he will be compelled to transmit an account of the produce every two days, and a detail of the consumption of provisions by the troops, as he ought to have a perfect knowledge of the effective force; and the minister of finance, or, in default of him, the major-general of the encampment, will pass it for him.

9. In this sub-magazine, if there is no superintendant, he will take particular care that the weights and measures are kept clean, as well to avoid all disgust to the troops as to ensure them justice and accuracy.

10. No provisions shall be distributed without the receipts being given in the form marked No. 3, as, if there are any alterations or scratching out, the accounts will not pass.

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An impolitic
distinction.

11. The account of any extra gratuitous refreshment of brandy, bread, wine, or cheese, should be received by the commissary of war who ordered it, or by the orders of the general.

12. Great attention should be paid to whether any corps draws for more provision than it uses, or has a right to, which should be compared with the individual details; and, if it should be discovered that it exceeds what it ought, he [the "financial minister," or assistant commissary-general with the corps d'armée] should inform his chief of it, in order to apply the necessary remedy; and he should bear well in his mind that the peasantry cannot draw any thing, the king only allowing this favour to his army and its dependents.

13. The object being that the troops shall not want for the principal succours; and that they shall enjoy them with all possible benefit, he shall take care that, in the distribution of provisions, the greatest accuracy is observed in the weight; and, as it is possible that in some of these there may be defects and decay, it shall be made good to the storekeepers in their respective accounts, two per cent. of common bacon which they may distribute, and upon salted bacon three per cent.; one per cent. for rice, and three per cent. for salt fish.

In the rest of the articles there shall be none, if all act with care and good faith.

14. In all the magazines inventories shall be kept

of the scales, weights, measures, chairs, tables, ink-stands, bags, baskets, and other articles for their use, of which copies shall be sent to the above-mentioned chief, signed by the respective store-keeper.

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15. Lastly, neither the storekeeper, nor any other person employed, can sell on his account any articles for the troops, and still less buy for them at a lower price, in order to sell it at an advanced one, nor under any other pretence whatever.

16. In any case not provided for in this instruction, they shall consult with their immediate chief, the minister of finance, and shall abide by their decisions.

SECT. III.

He is to examine carefully the different articles, and, if there should be any defect or deficiency, report to his chief, in order that he may take the necessary measures in consequence. The same he will do with the produce of the sale.

Daily operations of the storekeeper.

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1. To watch over the proceedings of the store-keeper.

Duties of the superintendent.

2. To keep his books in the greatest order and regularity.

3. To be very particular with respect to the weights, &c.

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4. To keep a constant and watchful eye over all royal effects.

5. To keep a key, conjointly with the storekeeper, of the money-chest, marking down in the book whenever he may have occasion to take out any money, and for what purpose.

6. If he absents himself on duty or otherwise, to give over the books to the storekeeper, who is responsible for any deficiency that may appear on his return.

7. To superintend the conduct of the inferior officers, and see that they do their duty.

Inferior officers.

To be entirely subservient to the storekeeper and superintendant. In the absence of the former, the adjutant will supply his place.

Seville, Aug. 23, 1809.

Sir,

Marquis Wellesley to don M. de Garay.

Your excellency will not be surprised to learn my extreme solicitude in consequence of the silence which this government has observed since the receipt of my note of the 21st August, containing a proposition for the improvement of the system for supplying the army in the field.

I most earnestly request that I may be favoured, as soon as possible, with the reply of the supreme central junta to that proposition, on the result of which, as your excellency has repeatedly stated, the security of Spain essentially depends. Availing

myself of this opportunity to renew to your excellency the assurances of my high consideration and esteem,

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I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) WELLESLEY.

Seville, Aug. 28, 1809.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your excellency's note of the 25th instant, and I have examined with great attention the communication from the department of war, which your excellency has been pleased to make to me by order of the supreme central junta.

Marquis Wellesley to M. de Garay.

The first and most important point stated in my notes of the 21st instant related to the establishment of a more efficient system for furnishing the means of supply and movement to the British army in the field. For this indispensable object I submit to your excellency a detailed plan, which I requested the government to carry into effect with all practicable celerity. In reply to this proposal on my part, your excellency has not stated to me any measures which have yet been adopted for the effectual establishment of the plan which I took the liberty of recommending; but your excellency, by the order of the supreme central junta, has communicated to me the copy of a "Royal Instruction for the Management of Magazines of Provisions for Armies in the Field;" and my opinion is desired by

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Garay.

the government with respect to any alteration which it may be proper to suggest for the amendment of that instruction. The instruction contains nothing more than a series of rules and orders for the internal management of magazines, relating merely to the details of that branch of service.

The general superintendence of the economy of the magazines is very properly confided, by the first article of the instruction, to an officer of the department of finance.

I have the honour to inform your excellency that I perceive no objections to the rules and orders contained in this instruction; but I must observe that this regulation alone would not be sufficient to correct the existing defects in the system of supplying the armies in the field. If this regulation is intended as a substitute for the plan which I have presumed to offer to your excellency, I must declare, with the freedom which your excellency has permitted me to use, that I cannot expect any substantial correction of those evils which have occasioned such calamities during the present campaign.

Your excellency's note, to which I have now the honour of replying, blends the suggestions which I proposed for an improved mode of subsisting the army with a detailed consideration for its future operations.

I request your excellency's permission to separate these points, for the purpose of considering

each distinct question with more perspicuity and accuracy. I have, therefore, confined this note to the separate objects of requesting to know from your excellency whether the plan which I submitted to you on the 21st instant, for the supply of the army in the field, is approved by the government; and whether any steps have been taken for the purpose of carrying it into execution.

I avail myself of this occasion to renew, &c.

(Signed) WELLESLEY.

Merida, 28th Aug. 1809.

My Lord,

I am anxious to receive your excellency's sentiments on the points described in my despatch of the 24th instant, as it will be necessary that I should make early arrangements to draw out of Portugal the supplies of ammunition, stores, and necessaries for the troops, which I have reason to believe are already collected at Elvas.

Having been able to separate the army, the troops have received their regular rations since the 25th instant, with the exception of the horses of the cavalry.

I have to inform your excellency, however, that none of the supplies either of provisions or of means of transport, which Monsieur de Calvo informed me, and the Spanish minister informed your excellency, were so near the army, have yet reached Merida, which is at least four marches

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Marquis Wellesley to M. de Garay.

Sir A. Wellesley to the marquis Wellesley.

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Sir A. Wellesley
to the marquis
Wellesley.

from Jaraycejo ; and I entertain doubts whether any of them were even ordered till your excellency presented your first note to the minister.

The officers and troops are still very unhealthy, and I fear that I shall find it difficult to remove them from hence to Elvas, where the British hospital is established, for want of carriages ; and I can get none here. The loss of horses likewise continues to be very great, on account of the necessity of giving them wheat instead of barley.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

Seville, Aug. 30, 1809.

Sir,

Lord Wellesley
to M. de
Garay.

My reply to that part of your excellency's note of the 25th instant, which relates to the position and operations of the army in Estremadura, has been delayed until I could receive accurate intelligence of the condition of sir Arthur Wellesley's army, and until I could possess the advantage of a full knowledge of his sentiments. I have received despatches from sir A. Wellesley to the date of the 28th instant, when he remained at Merida in consequence of my suggestion.

When I forwarded to sir A. Wellesley the suggestions contained in my note to your excellency of the 21st instant, I relied on this government that the plan for improving the means of supply and movements of the army would have been car-

ried into immediate effect. I also hoped that the exertions, which your excellency assured me this government had already made, might have afforded some aid to the British troops. Without these expectations and hopes, I should not have ventured to suggest to sir A. Wellesley any delay in the execution of his intention to fall back upon the supplies provided in Portugal.

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Lord Wellesley to M. de Garay.

In the despatch received from sir A. Wellesley this day, he informs me that none of the supplies, either of provisions or means of transport, promised by this government to the British army, had reached Merida, and that it was absolutely necessary, for the security of his army, that he should not postpone any longer the completion of his arrangements for drawing his supplies from Portugal. While I received this distressing intelligence from sir A. Wellesley, I suffer the additional regret of observing that this government has not yet given effect to any system for the better management of the subsistence or movement of the army.

Under these circumstances I find myself compelled not only to concur with sir A. Wellesley in those considerations which have induced him to form the intention of retiring to the frontier of Portugal, but I have strongly advised that officer not to delay the execution of a measure now rendered indispensable for the security of the remainder of that gallant army, which has already endured such sufferings in the cause of the Spanish nation.

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Lord Welles-
ley to M. de
Garay.

I therefore have the honour to request your excellency to inform the supreme central junta, that, in consequence of the total failure of the means of supply and transport necessary to enable the British army to act in Spain, that army, with my entire consent, will immediately move towards the frontier of Portugal.

It will remain for the wisdom of the supreme central junta to consider what system shall be adopted to prevent in future the embarrassments which have impeded the operations of the British army during this campaign. Your excellency will perceive, that, under the circumstances stated in this note, the plan of operations, and the arrangements proposed in your excellency's note of the 25th instant, are become impracticable in the present moment.

It is difficult to ascertain the immediate causes of the distress which has been suffered by our army since the hour of our arrival in Spain ; it is, however, perfectly evident, that, unless some change be effected in the mode of conducting the military department, the greatest danger is to be apprehended to the interests and honour of Spain.

I avail myself of this occasion to repeat to your excellency the assurances of my high consideration and esteem ; and I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) WELLESLEY.

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Sir,

I now have the honour of replying to your despatch of the 24th instant. I have received your despatch, dated the 28th August.

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Marquis Wellesley to sir A. Wellesley.

In submitting to your consideration the plan proposed for occupying a position on the line of the river Guadiana, I did not intend to suggest that position as a permanent station of defence against the enemy. I entertained a hope, that, under all the circumstances of the actual situation of the enemy's force, the position suggested might be safe for a sufficient time to enable you to try the result of the plan of supply for your army which I had offered to this government, and that the supplies which were provided in Portugal would at the same time be within your reach.

The resumption of offensive operations certainly appeared to me to be highly desirable, whenever it might become practicable within the line drawn by your instruction from lord Castlereagh of the 25th of May; but I was sufficiently apprized, by the intelligence which I had already received from you, that some time must elapse before your troops could recover the effects of the severe distress which they had suffered.

My opinion entirely coincides with that which you have stated, that no engagement exists either in the treaty between his majesty and the Spanish government, or in the spirit of the alliance, or in

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Marquis Wel-
lesley to sir A.
Wellesley.

my assurance authorized by you, to entitle the Spanish government to demand the aid of a British army in Spain.

Your entrance into Spain was a favour conferred upon the Spanish government, entirely beyond the conditions of the treaty, and the general obligations of the alliance ; and you were justified in confining the extent of your operations within such limits as you might deem most advisable, consistently with the tenour of your instructions. From the junction of your army with the Spanish troops a species of implied engagement certainly arose, under which it would not have been proper to have separated your army from that of Spain without an absolute necessity, founded either on the obligation of your instructions (which had been previously explained to the Spanish government), or in such an exigency of the case as must evidently have rendered further concert and co-operation with the Spanish army impracticable. Under the first consideration, the defence of Portugal must have formed the invariable object of your attention, and must have directed and limited the line of your operations. Under the second consideration, the failure of the Spanish government either in providing you with the necessary supplies and means of movement, or in affording to you the effectual co-operation of such a Spanish force as might enable you to oppose the enemy with a chance of success, must have dissolved any implied engage-

ment for the continuance of your army in Spain. In my judgment all these considerations now concur to release you from any such engagement. The mismanagement of the Spanish government, added to the misconduct of the Spanish generals and troops, exposes your army to certain destruction if you should attempt to remain in Spain. This case, indeed, does not appear to have been contemplated in your instructions, but it evidently involves every consideration which can be supposed to affect the safety of Portugal; for it must be evident that the defence of Portugal would be entirely abandoned by any act which should expose your army to risk, without any reasonable prospect of advantage to the common cause.

The inexpediency of contracting any new engagement to co-operate with the Spanish forces is proved by the same considerations which have left you free to exercise your judgment upon that question.

When I forwarded to your excellency the suggestions contained in my note of the 21st instant, I relied on the government that the plan for improving the means of supply and movement of the army would have been carried into immediate effect. I also hoped that the exertions (which I was assured had already been made by this government) would have afforded you some degree of intermediate relief. Without these hopes and expectations, I should not have attempted to induce you

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lesley to sir A.
Wellesley.

to hazard any further delay in Spain. But I have been entirely disappointed by the conduct of this government. By your despatch, dated the 22d of August, it appears that you have received no intermediate aid; no plan for the improvement of your supplies has been yet adopted. The foundation, therefore, of my propositions of the 22d of August, has failed.

Until I received your despatch of the 24th instant, I entertained a less unfavourable opinion of the Spanish army than you have stated; but I was convinced that it was vain to expect co-operation from any body of Spanish troops which should not be placed effectually under your command. If your army could have recovered its efficiency, if a proper system for your future supply could have been established, and if an adequate Spanish force could have been placed under your orders, I entertained a hope that offensive operations might have been resumed within a reasonable time with a prospect of success, and that the success of such a combined force under your command, and the manifest advantage of an improved plan of subsistence and transport, might have formed an example from which useful and practical principles might have been derived for the amelioration of every branch of the Spanish government, and especially of the military department. Reviewing, however, the events which have passed under my observation, the facts which you have stated, the condition of your army,

of the Spanish armies and government, and the relative strength and position of the enemy's force, I am reluctantly compelled to declare that it would not be advisable to attempt to resume offensive operations in Spain in the present moment, or within any period of time which can now be calculated.

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Marquis Wellesley to sir A. Wellesley.

Your despatch, No. 14, has satisfied me that the defence of Andalusia and of the southern provinces may be aided as effectually by the position of your army on the frontier of Portugal as by any other station which such a force could now occupy.

I have not therefore encouraged this government to expect either that you should remain within the Spanish frontiers, or that you should return within any stated time, for the purpose of co-operating with the Spanish army in any plan of a defensive nature. My note of this date to M. de Garay contains the only communications which I have made to the government on this question.

In this state of affairs it is a matter of some delicacy to attempt to recommend to the Spanish government the most eligible position for their army. This point must be left to their own discretion. As far as I have been able to collect the opinion of this government, they do not accord with your's, and it is not to be expected that the Spaniards should be inclined to relax any of their prejudices in the moment of the retirement of our army to the frontier of Portugal.

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lesley to sir A.
Wellesley.

Although it is evident that the retirement of the British army to Portugal is a measure of absolute necessity, created by the mismanagement of the Spanish government, by the misconduct of the Spanish generals and troops, and by circumstances in the state of the country which cannot in any degree be attributed to us, it is to be expected that the most unfavourable impression will be produced by this movement upon the minds of the government and people of Spain.

Impressions of this description are not governed by strict principles of reason or justice; but it is necessary to consider the influence and consequence of such prejudices in forming an estimate of the probable result of any course of public action.

It would, therefore, have been highly desirable to have been enabled to alleviate the force of these unfavourable circumstances by any promise or hope of the future co-operation of a considerable British force in Spain, under the condition that proper remedies should be applied by the Spanish government to those evils which have compelled your excellency to forfeit the advantage of the glorious successes obtained by his majesty's forces under your command. But it would be unwarrantable to encourage any definite expectation of such assistance; and I am apprehensive that the general terms in which suggestions of this description must be expressed will not be sufficient to induce the Spanish government to commence, with spirit and

ardour, those systematic efforts which would be required for the purpose of drawing forth the military resources of the country, and of applying them with vigour and effect against the hostile power of France.

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Marquis Wel-
lesley to sir A.
Wellesley.

It would certainly diminish the alarm and ill temper of the present moment in Spain if it were even possible to assure this government that your army would remain on the frontier of Portugal, and would be ready to act against the enemy in any case of necessity; but I am aware of the danger of entering into such an engagement, and I shall therefore abstain from any expression which may warrant that conclusion in the minds of the Spanish ministers.

The consternation which prevailed on the first rumour of your movement towards Portugal has abated in some degree by your continuance at Merida, and by the apparent dispersion and inaction of the enemy's force.

It is to be hoped that the dreadful apprehensions entertained by this government at the time when I wrote my despatch of the 22d August may not be realized so soon as to preclude us from considering the means of affording aid to the Spanish cause, under such conditions and arrangements as may render our assistance useful to Spain, without involving injury or danger to the interests of Great Britain.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed)

WELLESLEY.

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M. de Garay to
the marquis
Wellesley.*Seville, Aug. 30, 1809.*

Sir,

I have given an account to the supreme, central, and governing junta of the kingdom, of the official note of your excellency, under date of the 28th of this month, in which you are pleased to reply to that, which, by an order of his majesty, I had the honour to address to you, with the date of the 25th of the same month; in which I transmitted to you the communications I had received from the minister of war, with reference to the plan proposed by your excellency for the establishment of magazines of subsistence for the armies in the field; and I enclosed the royal instructions for the regulation of the said magazines. Your excellency has laid before me the considerations which suggested themselves to you, respecting these instructions, and has expressed your desire to know if the plan proposed by your excellency has been approved by the government, and if any steps have been taken for the purpose of carrying it into effect.

His majesty, having taken the whole question into consideration, has decided on giving his approbation to the plan which has been referred to, in all its parts; and, in consequence, a copy of the same is to be despatched immediately to the secretary of the office of finance, with the corresponding royal orders, to the intent that the most active and effectual measures be instantly adopted for carrying it into execution, and that as many persons as are

necessary for the purchase of grain, both in Estremadura and Andalusia, may be named ; as also for the several lines of magazines proposed by your excellency and approved by his majesty.

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M. de Garay to
the marquis
Wellesley.

I lay before your excellency this information for your guidance, and for the effects which you may conceive best adapted for the royal service of your sovereign, and for the defence of the just cause in which his Britannic majesty and your excellency have displayed so much interest.

I am advised by his majesty to lay before the consideration of your excellency (in the supposition that the question of the establishment of magazines of subsistence for the armies is already agreed upon) the urgent necessity of an answer from your excellency, respecting the active part in the military operations, required by the actual and critical circumstances, which he may depend upon the English troops for taking. As the secretary of the war-office informs me, with the date of yesterday, that, according to all the accounts which have been forwarded to him by the scouts of the army of Estremadura and La Mancha, the enemy was in retrograde motion ; that this movement might have originated in the accounts which have been received from the north, which compel them either to advance into the interior of France, or take up a position nearer to the Pyrenees ; but that it likewise might have for object the occupation of Old Castille, in which case the troops of Gallicia, the

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Wellesley.

Asturias, and Ciudad Rodrigo, would be very much exposed; and that for these reasons the secretary of war, with the approbation of his majesty, is of opinion that the armies should move with the greatest activity; whether to observe the movement of the enemy more closely, or to attack him when circumstances may render it expedient.

I make this communication to your excellency by a royal order; and his majesty, knowing the zeal of your excellency, and your attachment to Spain, does not doubt of your promptitude in making the arrangements which are best adapted, in your opinion, for sustaining the interests of this nation, and for defending the just cause of its liberty and independence, in which our respective sovereigns are so deeply engaged.—Your excellency will communicate to me the determination which may best accord with your sentiments.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

(Signed) MARTIN DE GARAY.

Seville, Aug. 31, 1809.

Sir,

Don M. de
Garay to the
marquis Wel-
lesley.

The secretary of the war-office has sent me the following information, under date of yesterday:—

I enclose to your excellency, by a royal order, a copy of the official note which has been transmitted by the marquis of Malespina to don Francisco D'Eguia, that you may make it known to the am-

bassador of England, and that you may be acquainted with the decision of sir Arthur Wellesley to march into Portugal, as likewise his doubts that the proposal for placing the armies behind the Guadiana had been made by the ambassador himself; and, as the actual circumstances require that our armies should move, it is necessary to know definitively whether the English co operate or not.

By order of the supreme central and governing junta of the kingdom, I make this communication to your excellency, in order that your excellency may be pleased to reply to me as best accords with your wishes, and that I may be enabled to make known that reply to the secretary of the war-office, for his guidance, and the requisite effects.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c. &c.

(Signed) MARTIN DE GARAY.

Seville, Sept. 1, 1809.

Sir,

I had the honour to receive, last night, your excellency's note, under date the 31st August, containing, by order of the supreme central junta, a question from the secretary of the department of war, respecting the operations of the British army under the command of sir Arthur Wellesley.

In my note, under date 30th August, I had the honour to state to your excellency, that, in consequence of the total failure of the means of supply

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and transport necessary to enable the British army to act in Spain, that army, with my entire consent, would immediately move towards the frontiers of Portugal.

I take the liberty of referring your excellency to the same note of the 30th August for a further explanation of the necessity which has absolutely compelled sir Arthur Wellesley to adopt this measure for the security of his troops.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c. &c.

(Signed)

WELLESLEY.

Thus agreeably ends the present opportunity for active exertion in Spain.

Foreign Office, Aug. 25, 1809.

Sir,

Mr. secretary Canning to the right hon. J. H. Frere.

I enclose to you a copy of a despatch which I have been commanded to address to the marquis Wellesley, signifying to his excellency his majesty's gracious compliance with the request of the Spanish government, that his majesty would be pleased to permit you to accept a title of honour, which it was the wish of the supreme junta to confer upon you, in the name of his catholic majesty, as a mark of acknowledgment for the zeal with which you have laboured to promote the friendly union and common interests of the two countries. I have it in command from his majesty to acquaint you, at the same time, that, in complying with this wish of the Spanish government, it is his majesty's understanding that the title of honour

which you may receive on this occasion is not to be publicly assumed and ordinarily borne by you within his majesty's dominions.

I am, &c.

(Signed)

GEORGE CANNING.

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The present important chapter cannot close more usefully than with the General Orders, which, not in the heat or enthusiasm of the moment, where a gallant act covers every minor consideration, but, after the most mature deliberation, his majesty was pleased to direct might be issued to the army on the affairs, the relation of which is now at an end.

There is nothing in this document, admirable in many respects, more conspicuous than the discrimination with which it selects the various objects of praise; and not merely reviews the past, but excites the future—by the *præcipere laudando*.

GENERAL ORDERS.

The commander-in-chief has received the king's commands to notify to the army the splendid victory obtained by his troops in Spain, under the command of lieutenant-general the right honourable sir Arthur Wellesley, on the 27th and 28th of last month, at the battle of Talavera de la Reyna.

Discriminative general orders issued to the army by his royal highness the commander-in-chief, on a due examination of the affair at Talavera, and its results.

His majesty is confident that his army will learn with becoming exultation that the enemy, after escaping by a precipitate retreat from the well-concerted attack with which sir Arthur Wellesley, in

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in conjunction with the Spanish army, had threatened him on the 24th of July, concentrated his force by calling to his aid the corps under the French general Sebastiani and the garrison of Madrid, and, thus reinforced, again approached the allied army on the 27th of July; and, on this occasion, owing to the local circumstances of its position, and to the deliberate purpose of the enemy to direct his whole efforts against the troops of his majesty, the British army sustained nearly the whole weight of this great contest, and has acquired the glory of having vanquished a French army double their numbers, *not in a short and partial struggle*, but in a battle obstinately contested *on two successive days (not wholly discontinued even throughout the intervening night)*, and fought under circumstances which brought both armies into close and repeated combat.

The king, in contemplating so glorious a display of the valour and prowess of his troops, has been graciously pleased to command that his royal approbation of the conduct of the army serving under the command of lieutenant-general sir Arthur Wellesley shall be thus publicly declared in general orders.

The commander-in-chief has received the king's commands to signify, in the most marked and special manner, the sense his majesty entertains of lieutenant-general sir Arthur Wellesley's personal services on this memorable occasion, not less dis-

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played in the result of the battle itself, than in the consummate ability, valour, and military resource, with which the many difficulties of this arduous and *protracted* contest were met and provided for by his experience and judgment.

The conduct of lieutenant-general Sherbrook, second in command, has entitled him to the king's marked approbation. His majesty has observed, with satisfaction, the manner in which he led on the troops to the charge with the bayonet, *a species of combat which on all occasions so well accords with the dauntless character of British soldiers.*

His majesty has noticed with the same gracious approbation the conduct of the several general and other officers. ALL HAVE DONE THEIR DUTY; most of them have had occasions of eminently distinguishing themselves, the instances of which have not escaped his majesty's attention.

It is his majesty's command that his royal approbation and thanks shall be given in the most distinct and most particular manner to the non-commissioned officers and private men. In no instance have they displayed with greater lustre their native valour and characteristic energy, nor have they on any former occasion more decidedly proved their superiority over the inveterate enemy of their country.

Brilliant, however, as is the victory obtained at Talavera, it is not solely on that occasion that lieu-

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tive general
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tenant-general sir Arthur Wellesley, and the troops under his command, are entitled to his majesty's applause. The important service effected in an early part of the campaign by the same army, under the command of the same distinguished general, by the *rapid march on the Douro*, the *passage of that river*, the total discomfiture of the enemy, and his *expulsion from the territory of one* of his majesty's ancient and most faithful allies, are circumstances which have made a lasting impression on his majesty's mind; and have induced his majesty to direct, that the operations of this *arduous and eventful* campaign shall be thus recorded, as furnishing *splendid examples of military skill, fortitude, perseverance*; and of a *spirit of enterprise, calculated to produce emulation in every part of his army*, and largely to add to the *renown*, and to the *military character*, of the British nation.

By order of the Right Honourable the
Commander-in-Chief,

HARRY CALVERT, Adjutant-General.

Horse-Guards, Aug. 18, 1809.

CHAP. V.

RETIREMENT OF THE BRITISH ARMY TOWARDS
THE PORTUGUESE FRONTIER.

Incapacity of the British Forces from Want of Supplies.—Reasons for the proposed Retirement of the British Army.—Reports of the Enemy as to the preceding Events.—New official Declarations of the Spanish Government as to the British Troops, &c.

Merida, Sept. 1, 1809.

My Lord,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your excellency's private letter of the 29th August, containing a copy of M. de Garay's note of the 25th August, and of your excellency's answer of the 28th, and of your despatches of the 30th of August.

I am happy to find that your excellency concurs with me in the opinion which I laid before you on

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the 24th, and I propose to-morrow to commence my movement from this place.

I intend that the greatest part of the army shall remain within the Spanish frontier, if I should be able to maintain it in that position; and I will apprize your excellency of the exact positions which I shall occupy, and, hereafter, of any change which I may think it necessary to make.

My reason for wishing not to engage to remain on the Portuguese frontier is, that the principal magazines of the British army are at Abrantes, Santarem, and Lisbon; and, notwithstanding the good will of the Portuguese government, and the inclination of the people to give us every assistance in their power, Alentejo being in a poor country, I find it impossible to maintain the whole army at such a distance from the magazines as the positions which they will occupy upon the frontier. I besides think that it is desirable that the Spanish government should be induced to look into and acquire an accurate knowledge of their real situation, compared with that of the enemy; and that they should be induced to make such an exertion as will at least provide for their defence by their own means.

On this account, and as I think I ought not to involve his majesty's army in any system of co-operation with the Spanish troops, for the reasons stated in my despatch of the 24th, I beg to decline to accept the honour, which the government have

offered to confer upon me, of the command of the corps of 12,000 men, to be left in this part of the country. I could not have accepted this command, under any circumstances, without his majesty's permission, except for the time that I should have considered myself authorized by the instructions of his majesty's ministers, or should have been enabled by circumstances, to continue in co-operation with the Spanish army; but, having been obliged to separate from them, and considering it advisable that the British army should not at present enter upon any system of co-operation with them again, I cannot take upon myself the command of any Spanish corps whatever.

In respect to offensive operations in future, it is desirable that the means actually existing in Spain, of the French and of the allies, should be reviewed, and the advantages which each party possesses in the use of these means should be weighed.

I estimate the French force in Spain, disposable for service in the field, to amount to 125,000 men, well provided with cavalry and artillery, in which number I do not include the garrisons of Pampluna, Barcelona, &c. &c.

I include, however, the corps commanded by St. Cyr and Suchet, which I calculate to amount to 32,000 men, which are employed in Arragon and Catalonia; and the remainder, being 90,000 men, are in Castille and Estremadura. Of this number 70,000 men are actually in the field, in the

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corps of Victor, Soult, Ney, Sebastiani, and Mortier; and the remainder are employed in garrisons, as at Madrid, Escorial, Avila, Valladolid, &c. &c. in keeping up the communication with those places; every man of whom might be brought into the field, if occasion required.

In these numbers I do not include sick and wounded, but found my calculations upon what I know were the numbers of the French army before the battle of Talavera, deducting a loss of 10,000 men in that battle.

Your excellency will observe that there are seven French corps in Spain; I believe there were originally eight, for Suchet's is the eighth corps; and each corps, composing in itself a complete army, ought to consist of from 30 to 40,000 men. Against this force the Spanish government have about 50,000 men in the two corps of Eguia and Venegas. Blake may have collected again about 6000 men, and the marquis de Romana has 15,000 men, of which number 1,500 have no arms. The duque del Parque has 9000 men in the garrison of Ciudad Rodrigo, but he is unwilling to detach them. Besides these numbers, the British army may be reckoned from 20 to 25,000 men.

I am aware that there are troops in Spain, besides those which I above enumerated; but they are not in any manner, and cannot be considered, disposable for the field. The plan of operations must be founded upon the relative numbers above stated.

But, besides considering the numbers, it is necessary to advert to the composition, and to the state of efficiency, of these different armies.

The French corps are, as I have already stated, each a complete army, having probably a greater proportion of cavalry, and certainly of artillery, than they ought to have for the existing numbers of their infantry; and they are well-disciplined excellent troops.

The Spanish troops of Venegas and Eguia have probably between them not less than 10,000 cavalry, which is more than their proportion; and they are well provided with artillery; but the corps of Romana has neither cavalry nor artillery, and, for want of these arms, is unable to quit the mountains of Gallicia. The duque del Parque is unable, if he were willing, to assist him with what he wants.

Blake's corps, I believe, consists only of infantry. Both infantry and cavalry are comparatively undisciplined. The cavalry are tolerably well clothed, well armed, accoutred, and mounted; but the infantry are not clothed nor accoutred as they ought to be, notwithstanding the large supplies of clothing and accoutrements sent out from England. With these relative numbers, and adverting to the state of discipline and efficiency of the different armies, it would appear impossible to undertake any offensive operations with any hope of success; more particularly adverting to the local difficulties with

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Sir A. Wellesley to the marquis Wellesley.

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which the allies would have to contend, and to the advantages of the enemy.

The enemy has it in his power to collect his whole force in Castille and Estremadura at any point north of the Tagus, and can dispose of the parts of it in the front or rear of the armies of the allies as he may think proper. The allies must move upon the enemy in two distinct corps; at least there can be no military communications between the corps assembled in this part of Estremadura and that which would advance from La Carolina through La Mancha, on account of the chain of mountains on the whole of the left bank of the Tagus, from the Puente de Miravete to the bridge of Toledo. The only communication which these two corps can have is by the right bank of the river from Almaraz, and by the bridge of Toledo; and it is obvious that a battle must be fought with the enemy's whole force, and won by one of those corps, before that communication can be established.

This consideration was the reason, that, in the late operations, the march of Venegas was directed upon Veana and Fuente Duenas and Arganda. It was impossible to join with Venegas before a battle should be fought with the enemy's whole force by one of the armies; and it was thought best to order Venegas to adopt such a line of march as should be most distant from the combined armies, in relation to which and the combined armies

the enemy could not have taken up a central position, from which he could have had the choice of attacking either. The enemy would thus have been forced either to detach to oppose Venegas, or, if he had kept his whole force collected to fight the combined corps advancing from this side, he would have lost Madrid, and his retreat would have been cut off.

Venegas, however, did not obey the orders he received, I believe in consequence of directions from the junta. Instead of being at Arganda, close to Madrid, on the 23d, he did not approach the Tagus until the 28th, where he was kept in check at Toledo by 2000 men, while the whole army were engaged with us at Talavera.

These circumstances will shew your excellency the difficulty which attends the position of the allies, and indeed ought to have some influence with the Spanish government in the distribution of their troops at present.

The French, having 70,000 men disposable in Castille and Estremadura, may employ them either in opposing the advances of the allies from this side, who could not bring more than from 50,000 to 55,000 to oppose them; or they would detach 20,000 to oppose Venegas, and meet the allies with 50,000. The whole would thus be kept in check, even if it could be hoped that one or both corps would not be defeated.

The marquis de Romana, the duque del Parque, Blake, &c. could afford no relief from these em-

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barrassing circumstances; having no cavalry to enable them to enter the plains of Castille, nor artillery.

But, even if these first difficulties could be overcome, and the French armies should retire to the northward, the numbers of the allies would be found still more unequal to those of the enemy. The corps of St. Cyr and Suchet would then take their place in the operations; and the Spanish armies would have no corresponding increase. The difficulties, however, are of a nature not to be overcome by the means at present in the power of the Spanish government; they must increase their forces and discipline, clothe and equip their troops, before they can reasonably attempt any offensive operations against the French; and in the mean time it becomes a question how the troops ought to be disposed of. From what I have already stated, your excellency must observe the importance of their having a strong Spanish corps in this part of Estremadura. The British army must necessarily be the foundation of any offensive operation the Spanish government can undertake; and it is obvious that the place of this army must be on the left of the whole, issuing from the frontiers of Portugal.

If the Spanish troops which are to act with the British army should be weak, their operations must be checked at an early period; and in that case I should apprehend that the operations of the larger

Spanish corps directed from La Carolina would not be very successful.

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Sir A. Wellesley to the Marquis Wellesley.

But the prospects of these offensive operations may be considered too distant to render it reasonable to advert to them in a disposition of the Spanish army which is now about to be formed, and I would therefore suggest other grounds for recommending that the army in Estremadura should not if possible be weakened.

Your excellency has observed that Soult entertains a design of attacking Ciudad Rodrigo; which design I understand was discussed and recommended by a council of war held some time ago at Salamanca.

The success of this enterprise would do more mischief than the French are capable of doing in any other manner. It would completely cut off the only communication the Spanish government have with the northern provinces; would give the French the perpetual possession of Castille; and would probably occasion the loss of the Portuguese fort of Almeida.

I should be desirous to make every exertion to ease Ciudad Rodrigo; but if Estremadura should be left with only 12,000 men, it must be obvious to your excellency that Seville, as well as Portugal, will be exposed, while I shall be removed from this part of the country.

I am much afraid, from what I have seen of the proceedings of the central junta, that, in the distri-

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bution of their forces, they do not consider military defence, and military operations, so much as they do political intrigue, and the attainments of trifling political objects.

They wish to strengthen the army of Venegas, not because it is necessary or desirable on military grounds, but because they think the army, as an instrument of mischief, is safer in his hands than those of another; and they leave 12,000 men in Estremadura, not because more are not or may not be deemed necessary in a military view of the question, but because they are averse to placing a larger body under the command of the duke of Albuquerque, whom I know that the junta of Estremadura have insisted should be employed to command the army in this province.

I cannot avoid to observe these little views and objects, and to mention them to your excellency, at the same time that I lament that the attention of those, who have to manage such great and important affairs as those are which are intrusted to the management of the central junta, should be diverted from great objects to others of trifling importance.

I cannot conclude this letter without adverting to the mode in which don Martin de Garay, in his note to your excellency of the 25th instant, disposes of the Portuguese troops, without having had one word of communication with the Portuguese government, or any body connected with it, respecting them.

In fact, those troops have been equally ill (indeed I might say worse) treated than the British troops by the officers of the Spanish government, and were at last obliged to quit Spain for want of food. I will no more allow them, than I will allow the British troops, to enter Spain again, unless I should have some solid ground for believing that they will be supplied as they ought.

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Sir A. Wellesley to the marquis Wellesley.

It is a curious circumstance respecting marshal Beresford's corps, that the cabildo of Ciudad Rodrigo actually refused to allow them to have 30,000 of 100,000 pounds of biscuit (which I had prepared there, in case the operations of the army should be directed to that quarter, and for which the British commissary had paid), and seized the biscuit, on the ground that debts due to the town of Ciudad Rodrigo, by the British army lately under the command of sir John Moore, had not been paid, although one of the objects of the mission of the same commissary to Ciudad Rodrigo was to settle the accounts and discharge those debts.

Singular effect of debts due by the army of sir J. Moore.

Yet this same cabildo will call for assistance as soon as they shall perceive the intention of the enemy to attack them, having seized, and holding probably in their possession at the moment, the means, which, if lodged as directed in the stores at Almeida, would enable me effectually to provide for their relief.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

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Badojoz, Sept. 3, 1809.

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Sir A. Welles-
ley to the mar-
quis Wellesley.

My Lord,

I have received from lord Castlereagh copies of Mr. secretary Canning's despatches to your excellency, dated 12th August, and I have been directed by his lordship to lay before your excellency my opinion on the points referred to in those despatches.

The letters which I have had the honour of addressing to your excellency, on the 24th August and the 1st of September, will have apprized you of my opinion on the first point referred to by Mr. secretary Canning, as to the prospect of success in offensive operations against the enemy, which opinion I should equally entertain, even though the British army could be increased to 40,000 instead of 30,000 men, as long as the Spanish armies will continue of the limited numbers, in the undisciplined and inefficient state, and ill-composed as they are at present.

Your excellency has before you, in my despatch of the 1st September, the detailed information upon which I found my opinion, upon which you may form your own, if the information should be found correct; if it should be found materially erroneous, it may be corrected.

In the existing state of the forces of the enemy, and of the allies in the Peninsula, it would be difficult for the British army, if not impossible, to connect the defence of Portugal with that of Spain,

and quite impossible, unless improvement should be made in the mode of supplying armies in Spain. Hereafter, when it is possible that the existing relative numbers of the armies will be altered to the advantage of the enemy, it will be quite impossible for the British army to connect with the defence of Portugal that of the south of Spain. The government have determined to defend Portugal; but, if it should be hereafter determined to defend the south of Spain instead of Portugal, I conceive it will be absolutely necessary that the commanding officer of the British troops should have the command of the Spanish army; that we should have a garrison at Cadiz; and that the most efficient measures should be adopted to secure supplies and means of transport for the allied armies.

I have the honour to be, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

Seville, Sept. 4, 1809.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward to you, by Mr. Wellesley, the copy of a despatch which I have just received from Mr. secretary Canning, under date the 12th August.

The despatch contains so full and clear a view of the points to which it relates, and so completely embraces the important questions which have lately been discussed with this government, that it is unnecessary for me to add any observations upon those subjects.

The copy of Mr. Canning's despatch has been


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 Marquis Wel-
lesley to sir
A. Wellesley.

made with a view to obtain the general purport of your excellency's sentiments with the least practicable delay; and I should esteem it a particular favour if you would return that copy, with such remarks as you may think fit to insert in the margin, by an express courier.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) WELLESLEY.

Sept. 4, 1809.

 Sir A. Wellesley
to lord Castle-
reagh.

Having continued the march of the army from Truxillo, after I had written to you last, I was induced to halt for a few days at Merida, in consequence of a letter of the 22d August, which I received from lord Wellesley, a copy of which will go to you by this occasion; and I have occupied such positions with the troops as will enable them to subsist and to get the necessary refreshments with ease, at the same time that I have it in my power to collect them in a short space of time.

I have ordered brigadier-general Catlin Crawford to join the army with the 11th and 57th, and four of the battalions arrived from Ireland, and that the horse-artillery, and the horse for the artillery, recently sent from Cork, should come up from Lisbon.

The enemy have continued nearly in the same positions since I addressed your lordship on the 21st August. Marshal Ney is at Salamanca, and there appears to be another French corps in Old Castille, which I believe is the 6th corps under the command of general Kellerman. Marshal Soult is

at Coria, with his advanced posts at Moralejo and Zarza Mayor ; but he has not with him more than from 6000 to 8000 men. Marshal Mortier is at Arzobispo, and two divisions of Victor's corps are at Talavera, and the remainder in La Mancha with the 4th corps, hitherto called Sebastiani's. That general is dead of his wounds.

I have heard that the French are again retiring from La Mancha ; but I have no authentic account of that movement.

The Spanish head-quarters have been moved from Deleytosa to Truxillo, partly in consequence of their finding it difficult to support their army in the exhausted country upon the left bank of the Tagus, and partly on account of orders received from the junta to detach the greatest part of the army to La Carolina, leaving only 12,000 men in Estremadura. They still occupy La Mesa d'Ibor and the Puerto de Mirabete, opposite Almaraz, in which last post they relieved our troops on the 20th. I have communicated to lord Wellesley, as your lordship will see, my opinion of the danger which may attend this disposition of the forces, and I have urged the government to make an exertion to maintain their strong position upon the Tagus. But I doubt whether my remonstrances will have any effect ; and I expect that, if the enemy should make an attack upon Ciudad Rodrigo, he will possess himself of the Tagus, and probably of the Guadiana nearly to this place at the same time.

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to lord Castle-
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Sir A. Wellesley to the marquis Wellesley.

My Lord,

Badajoz, Sept. 5, 1809.

I have had the honour of receiving your excellency's letter of the 4th instant. I considered my despatches of the 29th August, and 1st and 3d instant, as containing my opinion upon all the points in Mr. secretary Canning's despatch to your excellency of the 12th August; and, accordingly, I sent copies of these despatches to England yesterday, with a letter to lord Castle-reagh, of which I enclose a copy.

I have, however, now written, in the margin of the copy which your excellency has sent me of the despatch of the 12th August from Mr. Canning, answers upon the points on which I understand, from Mr. Wellesley, that your excellency wishes for my opinion.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

Seville, Sept. 8, 1809.

Sir,

Marquis Wellesley to M. de Garay.

In my note of the 30th of August I had the honour to inform your excellency that the British troops under the command of sir Arthur Wellesley, with my entire consent, would immediately move towards the frontier of Portugal, for the purpose of receiving the necessary supplies, which the government of Spain had not furnished to those generous defenders of the Spanish cause.

The British army accordingly is now stationed near the Portuguese frontier; a part of the army is in Portugal, and the remainder on the Spanish territory, occupying a position, which would menace the flank and rear of the enemy, if he should advance towards Andalusia.

I cannot, however, give the Spanish government any assurances that the British army will continue in that position.

It may become necessary to approach the British magazines established at distant points within the Portuguese frontier, or the immediate defence of Portugal may require the presence of our troops in that kingdom. In either case I request your excellency to understand that the British army will be compelled to withdraw entirely from Spain.

In this situation of affairs, the interests and honour of Great Britain and of Spain demand a full and distinct explanation of the present condition and the future intentions of both parties.

The despatches which I have received from sir A. Wellesley, and the instructions with which I have been recently honoured by the commands of my sovereign, enable me to submit to the supreme central junta a declaration, of which the grounds, motives, and objects, are plain and intelligible.

In the course of the contest with France, Great Britain and her allies have aided Spain; 1st, by supplies of various descriptions sent into the Spanish ports; 2d, by powerful military diversions, which

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have employed the main body of the enemy's force in distant parts of Europe; 3d, by the direct co-operation of British armies in the Spanish territory.

From the termination of former discussions, after the retirement of the troops under the command of the late sir John Moore, the British and Spanish governments appeared to have agreed to postpone for future consideration that species of assistance which consists in the services of British troops within the Spanish territory.

From that period of time the attention of the British government had been more particularly and exclusively directed to the security of Portugal; and the confidence which the Portuguese government had reposed in us justified the British government in considering the defence of Portugal as the primary object of our military operations in the Peninsula.

The security of Portugal, however, did not necessarily confine the British army within the frontier of that kingdom, whenever an occasion might arise of such co-operation with the Spanish armies as might not leave Portugal exposed to the enemy.

Such was the state of affairs previously to the entrance of sir A. Wellesley's army into Spain. Neither the terms of existing treaties, nor the spirit of the alliance, nor the result of previous discussions, entitled the Spanish government, at that time, to demand the services of a British army in Spain.

But the instruction which sir A. Wellesley had

received from his sovereign permitted him to concede to the Spanish government testimonies of amity beyond the positive terms of treaty or the express obligations of alliance, and he was therefore at liberty to receive the propositions of the Spanish general, and of the Spanish government, for any plan of occasional concert within the Spanish territory which might tend to promote the interests of Spain without hazard to the safety of Portugal.

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If the British government had deemed it necessary to insist on the establishment of the regular conditions of a treaty previously to the entrance of any British army into Spain, even for the most confined operations, it would have been reasonable and just to have required from the Spanish government, 1st, satisfactory security for the supply of provisions and means of movement to the auxiliary force ; 2d, effectual arrangements, not only for the active co-operation of the Spanish force immediately attached to the auxiliary British troops, but for an united and connected system of aid and assistance from the operations of every division and branch of the Spanish army in all the provinces.

Evils of a want
of diplomatic
regulation.

If these conditions were not positively required from the Spanish government, in the form of a treaty, before sir A. Wellesley's army was permitted to pass the frontiers of Portugal, your excellency cannot doubt that it was presumed to be impossible that the Spanish government could even con-

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sent to receive a British army within the territories of Spain, without having secured the means for its subsistence, and for its action against the enemy.

Your excellency will observe, that if the Spanish government omitted these indispensable precautions, or was unable effectually to provide them, it was inconsistent with the safety of Portugal to solicit the entrance of a British army into Spain, even on the most limited and narrow scale of operations; for it is evident that the British army, under such circumstances, could not advance into Spain without imminent hazard to its own existence, and, consequently, to the safety of Portugal. The same considerations, therefore, which justified the advance of the British army into Spain, must have required its return to Portugal, if the Spanish government should not furnish it with the requisite supplies, or with the effectual co-operation of the Spanish army.

The British army under sir Arthur Wellesley entered Spain at the earnest solicitation of this government and of its officers; early notice was given to the Spanish government of the approach of our troops; and the line of their movements, and the limits of their operations, were fully concerted and accurately defined in conferences and correspondence with the Spanish officers.

After these solicitations and apparent precautions, it is a melancholy task to examine the situation of the British army throughout the whole course of its

arduous and transcendent achievement, in asserting the independence of the Spanish monarch, and the liberties and glory of the Spanish nation.

From the hour of sir A. Wellesley's advance into Spain, his troops have wanted the ordinary means of transport, the common necessities of subsistence, and every article requisite to enable an army, not only to move, but even to exist.

The distress of the British troops commenced as early as the 16th of July ; it was regularly notified to the Spanish general and to the Spanish government. The calamity, however, was not alleviated ; it continued to increase ; and, since the glorious day of Talavera, sir Arthur Wellesley has seen the remainder of the brave army which achieved that victory suffering the extremity of hunger and disease, while the hourly diminution of the means of movement and conveyance precluded all hope of remedy, and all prospect of recovery, within the territory of Spain.

The officers ordered by the Spanish government to aid the British army in obtaining supplies have not only neglected their duty, but, in various instances, have deprived the British soldiers of the supplies which had been provided by the British commissaries.

Great Britain, with the zeal and generosity of sincere friendship, has accumulated supplies of every description in the ports of Spain, and has shed her noblest blood on the Spanish soil.

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Marquis Wellesley to M. de Garay.

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But the agents of the Spanish government have seized by violence the subsistence destined for the British army; and have denied the means of conveyance to our sick and wounded soldiers, while those means abounded in the camps and towns of Spain.

The troops of Portugal received the same injurious treatment, as soon as those faithful allies entered the territory of Spain; nor could the allied armies of Great Britain and Portugal have suffered greater distress in the country of their most inveterate enemy.

In addition to the want of supplies, I am deeply concerned to be compelled to lament a similar defect of co-operation on the part of the Spanish generals. No spirit of union, concord, or energy, has appeared in those who were ostensibly joined with the allies in a common cause, and in an united system of action. Important plans, previously concerted with the British general, have been suddenly abandoned in the most critical moments of the campaign.

Without previous notice, and without necessity, positions have been relinquished, which were essential, not only to the success of offensive operations, but to the common security of defence, and even to the protection of our sick and wounded soldiers.

Further instances of the want of co-operation might be adduced; but I wish merely to point your

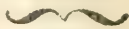
excellency's attention to misfortunes, of which the detailed enumeration might be painful.

These unhappy circumstances, however, as well as the facts which I have stated, require the serious notice of the Spanish government ; the interest of the alliance, justice to Great Britain, the honour and safety of Spain, demand an unreserved manifestation of the truth, which cannot be suppressed without positive danger to the great cause in which the alliance engaged. With this view, and with sentiments of the most cordial attachment to the reciprocal amity of both nations, I declare, on the part of the British government, that the army under the command of sir Arthur Wellesley has neither been supplied by the civil authorities, nor aided by the military power of Spain, in any degree sufficient to enable him to contend with the French force opposed to him in the field ; and that these causes alone have compelled sir A. Wellesley to retire within the reach of more adequate assistance, and to resume the defence of Portugal, as the sole object of his immediate operations.

The British army entered Spain gratuitously, achieved the most glorious actions during its continuance in the Spanish territory, and has retired under an irresistible necessity, occasioned by no act of the British government, or of its officers.

The government of Spain will now consider the nature of those sufferings which our army has endured, the causes which have deprived our army

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of subsistence and of co-operation, and the remedies which may be applied to evils of such extensive and imminent danger. Until these evils shall be effectually remedied to the entire satisfaction of the British government, and until other necessary arrangements shall be made for the security of the British troops, no British army can attempt to co-operate with the Spanish armies within the territories of Spain.

His majesty, however, will continue to entertain the most cordial attachment to the cause of Spain, and to the principles of the alliance; and his majesty will omit no effort, consistent with the means and interests of his own kingdom, to aid the exertions of the Spanish nation by every other mode of assistance. The commands which I have had the honour to receive from his majesty authorize me further to express a most anxious solicitude that the government of Spain should employ every exertion calculated to cultivate and improve the proper resources of this vast and powerful empire in every branch of its extensive dominions, to draw forth the intrinsic strength of the country by a due direction of the loyal energies of the people, and to resort to a provident and wise application of the native wealth and powers of Spain, as the only means of her ultimate deliverance, and the only solid foundation of her future security.

In this unreserved advice the government of

Spain will perceive the most unquestionable proof of his majesty's sincere anxiety for the independence and stability of the Spanish monarchy, and for the prosperity and honour of Spain ; since it is evident that the independence of a nation must rest on the basis of her own internal force and public spirit ; and that no country can attain or preserve happiness or glory by implicit reliance on foreign aid.

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Marquis Wellesley to M. de Garay.

For these great objects, I should view with the most lively satisfaction any regular, deliberate, and systematic attention to the increase and management of the military resources of Spain, and to the augmentation, composition, discipline, and efficiency, of the Spanish armies.

For the same purpose it would be highly advantageous to revise the whole system of the military department ; and especially to establish, by law, regulations for securing supplies and means of transport for the armies employed in the defence of Spain.

But the source of every improvement must be the efficiency of the executive power, which can never possess sufficient force or activity without the direct assistance of the collective wisdom of the nation, and without the aid of that spirit which must arise from the immediate support of a people animated by equal sentiments of loyalty and freedom.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed)

WELLESLEY.

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Sir A. Welles-
ley to lord
Castlereagh.

My Lord,

Affairs have remained nearly in the state in which they were when I addressed you on the 4th inst. The enemy has not moved, and the Spanish head-quarters still continue at Truxillo. General Vanegas has, I understand, again moved forward into La Mancha, the enemy having retired towards Toledo.

The army under the command of the marquis de Romana has moved from Galicia through Portugal, and is arrived in the neighbourhood of Ciudad Rodrigo, where it is to be under the command of the duque del Parque, the marquis de Romana being on his way to Seville, and expected here to-morrow.

I understand that this corps consists of about 13,000 men.

I have the honour to be, &c.

ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

*Badajoz, Sept. 21, 1809.—Received
Oct. 18, 1809.*

My Lord,

Lieut.-general
lord viscount
Wellington,
K. B. to lord
viscount Cas-
tlereagh.

Since I addressed you on the 13th instant, marshal Soult has collected his corps at Placentia; but I have not heard that the enemy have made any movements in any other quarter. I conclude, therefore, that this assembly of Soult's corps is to be attributed to the arrival of that lately under the command of the marquis de

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Lieut.-general
lord viscount
Wellington,
K. B. to lord
viscount Castlereagh.

Romana in the neighbourhood of Ciudad Rodrigo; and to the subsequent movements which I understand it has made into the mountains of Perales and Gata, and even as far as Banos. General Eguia's head-quarters have been moved from Truxillo to La Serena, and I understand that the whole of the Spanish army which has hitherto been in Estremadura, with the exception of 10,000 men, are to march into La Carolina.

The 10,000 men are to remain in Estremadura, under the command of the duque d'Albuquerque.

I am apprehensive that this disposition of the Spanish forces may be attended by bad consequences if the British army should be obliged to quit its present position.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed)

WELLINGTON.

Sept. 23, 1809.

My Lord,

I have received and laid before the king your lordship's two letters of the 4th of September; the one containing your reasoning for adopting the measure of falling back on the frontier of Portugal, and your correspondence with lord Wellesley on that subject; the other the information you had received of the enemy's probable intentions.

Lord Castle-
reagh to lord
Wellington.

You have already received a signification of the king's approbation with regard to the measures you

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Lord Castle-
reagh to lord
Wellington.

are pursuing for retiring upon Portugal, and I am to express the confidence his majesty feels that you will not neglect any consistent opportunity of defeating the enemy's views, and of obstructing his designs upon that kingdom, which you shall find within the power of the forces you may command.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CASTLEREAGH.

FRENCH REPORT "TO THE KING," COMMANDING
THE FRENCH ARMIES IN SPAIN.

Sire,

Moniteur.
Paris, Sept. 27.

Your majesty has ordered me to draw up a general report of the operations of the army, from the 23d of July last to the 15th instant. I have strictly complied with your commands.

Before I give your Majesty an account of the marches of the different corps of the army, and the brilliant actions which have conferred glory on the imperial troops, I think it necessary, for the elucidation of my report, to describe the position of the respective corps of the imperial army and that of the hostile armies on the 20th of July.

POSITION OF THE IMPERIAL ARMY, AND OF
THE ENEMY'S ARMY, ON THE 20TH JULY,
1809.

At this time the 4th corps, commanded by general Sebastiani, was posted at Consuegra and

Madridejos, watching the army of Venegas, 30,000 strong. This army occupied Manzanares and Daymiel, and had its advanced posts on the Guadiana.

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Moniteur.
Paris, Sept. 27.

The 1st corps, commanded by marshal the duke of Belluno, was posted on the left bank of the Alberche, in front of Casalegas, covering the pass from Talavera towards Madrid. The advanced guard of this corps of the army occupied Talavera de la Reyna.

Marshal the duke of Belluno watched the army of Cuesta, 30,000 strong, which had crossed to the right bank of the Tagus, by a bridge thrown over that river at Almaraz, and by the bridge of Arzobispo.

Your majesty had received orders from his imperial and royal majesty, directing that the duke of Dalmatia should unite, under his command, the 2d, 5th, and 6th corps, consisting of 80 battalions and 30 squadrons, amounting to upwards of 60,000 effective men; that he should march against the English, should seek them out wherever they might be, and engage them.

Meanwhile the 2d corps still occupied Salamanca and Zamora.

The 5th corps was in Valladolid and its environs, and the 6th occupied Benevente, Astorga, and Leon. The latter corps had in its front the troops commanded by La Romana, and the insurgents of Galicia and the Asturias.

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Independently of the armies of the insurgents, report announced that an English army, 50,000 strong, was assembling in the environs of Placentia, under the command of general Wellesley.

On the 22d July your majesty received intelligence, from marshal the duke of Belluno, that the English army, under the command of general Wellesley, had formed a junction, between the Tagus and the Tietar, with the army of Cuesta, and that this combined force was on its march towards Talavera; while a corps of eight or ten thousand men, commanded by general Wilson, was advancing towards Escalona, along the right bank of the Alberche. The danger was imminent; and it was necessary to take decided measures.

The same day (22d) your majesty sent orders to marshal the duke of Dalmatia to unite speedily, at Salamanca, the three corps of the army under his command, and to advance rapidly to Placentia, in order to break the line of operation of the hostile army. You, at the same time, ordered general Sebastiani to proceed, by forced marches, with the 4th corps, from Madridejos to Toledo. Your majesty left Madrid, in the night between the 22d and 23d, with your reserve, composed of the royal guard, and the brigade of general Oudinot, formed of the 12th regiment of infantry, the 51st regiment of the line, and the 27th regiment of horse chas-seurs. The command of this reserve was intrusted to the general of division, Dessolles.

In proceeding to Naval-Carnero your majesty had a twofold object: to check the march of general Wilson, who endeavoured to get in the rear of the 1st corps, by Escalona; and to form a junction with marshal the duke of Belluno, with a view to enable him to keep the enemy in check till the junction of the 4th corps, and till the result of the march of marshal the duke of Dalmatia should be ascertained.

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Meanwhile, in the evening of the 23d, marshal the duke of Belluno informed your majesty, that, on the 22d, the advanced guard of his corps of the army had been obliged to quit Talavera de la Reyna, and to retire along the left bank of the Alberche; that he was certain he should be attacked, on the 24th, by the combined armies of the English and Cuesta; and that, unwilling to hazard the 1st corps against such a superior force, he should march in the night between the 23d and 24th, and proceed in two days to the left bank of the Guadarama, at its conflux with the Tagus, near Toledo, in order to effect a junction with the 4th corps. Your majesty will highly approve the movement of marshal the duke of Belluno; for, if that marshal had retreated upon Naval-Carnero, instead of retiring to Toledo, the junction of the 1st and 4th corps would have been rendered extremely difficult, and perhaps even impossible.

It is likewise very certain that marshal the duke of Belluno had formed a correct judgment of the

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designs of the enemy. Orders found upon the officers have proved that the 1st corps was to have been attacked, on the morning of the 24th, by the English army and that of Cuesta, in its position on the Alberche, whilst Wilson's corps was to have endeavoured to cut off its retreat towards Madrid, by advancing from Escalona upon Naval-Carnero.

Your majesty, on receiving the letter of marshal the duke of Belluno, took the resolution of proceeding also towards Toledo, with your reserve, in order to form a junction with the 1st and 4th corps, and to present to the enemy a body, imposing, not from its numbers, but from its valour.

On the 24th, your majesty advanced with your reserve to Cavanara, three leagues from Toledo. The next day, the 25th, you fixed your headquarters at Bargas.

The same day, general Sebastiani, after ably disguising his movements from Vanegas, arrived with the 4th corps at Toledo. Lastly, the 1st corps had taken a position on the left bank of the Guadarama; so that all the troops which it was in your majesty's power to oppose to the enemy were united.

Your majesty ordered a detachment to be left at Toledo, to guard that city and the bridges.

On the 26th your majesty ordered the whole army to pass over the bridge of Guadarama, and advance upon Torrijos. The first corps opened the march. General Latour Maubourg commanded

the whole of the cavalry of the first corps, to which your majesty had joined the division of light cavalry, under general Merlin, which had previously been attached to the 4th corps.

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On the 25th Cuesta's army took up a position at Santa Olalla; it was to continue its march on the 26th, to advance upon Toledo, with a view to attempt a junction with Vanegas. The English army had not yet quitted Talavera, but had pushed its advanced guard to Casalegas, on the left bank of the Alberche. Wilson's corps had continued its movement, and had pushed its advanced posts to Naval-Carnero.

(Then follows the account of the battle of Talavera, during which battle the legion had marched from Naval-Carnero and the neighbourhood of Mostoloz, to rejoin lord Wellington, by his order received on the morning of the 27th; but the French army intervening, they were lodged, during that battle, in a wood half a mile from Casalegas, the head-quarters of Joseph, and immediately in the rear of the enemy's army. After that battle *they voluntarily re-advanced to remove the French from their position*, and thus the enemy certifies the success of that very interesting operation.)

On the 31st the 4th corps and the reserve rested.

In the night between the 31st of July and the 1st of August marshal the duke of Belluno informed your majesty that he was apprized that the

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English army still remained at Talavera, with that of Cuesta; *and that a Portuguese column had put itself in motion among the mountains, to turn the right of the first corps. He added, that, in consequence of this intelligence, he should quit his position, and retire upon Maqueda.* On the other hand, your majesty was informed, that Vanegas had withdrawn from before Toledo part of his troops who had attacked that place; that he was concentrating his forces upon Aranjuez; and that he manifested an intention of marching towards Madrid. Your majesty then thought fit to post the 4th corps and the reserve in such a manner as to enable them to advance rapidly either upon the 1st corps, to impede the march of the combined and discomfited army, or upon Vanegas, if his army attempted to march towards Madrid.

Your majesty, in consequence, ordered that a garrison should be left at Toledo, under the command of the adjutant-commandant Mocquerey, whom you appointed governor of that place; and that the reserve and the 4th corps should march, and take up a position on the 1st of August at Illescas. General Milhaud received orders to send out strong parties of cavalry in the direction of Valdemoro, to watch the motions of the army of Vanegas. Vanegas caused his advanced posts to fall back, and merely kept an advanced guard on the right bank of the Tagus, in front of Aranjuez.—

August the 2d and 3d, the 4th corps and the reserve remained in their positions.

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August the 2d, the duke of Belluno informed your majesty by letter that the enemy appeared in the direction of Escalona, on the right bank of the Alberche; and that the parties which had been sent from Escalona to Numbella had been attacked by some troops of the enemy's cavalry*. The marshal added, that he had sent two regiments of dragoons with orders to observe what was passing there; and that, if he learned that the enemy was directing his course to that point, he would retire upon Mostoloz†; but that, in the contrary case, he should remain at Maqueda.

The report of the duke de Belluno did not announce the march of the combined army: it related only to Wilson's corps, which manifested an intention of annoying the right of the 1st corps. Your majesty then thought that it was not yet time to join the 1st corps with the 4th and the reserve; but with a view to facilitate their junction, if it should be found necessary, you proceeded with your reserve, in the night between the 3d and 4th of August, to Mostoloz, and the 4th corps remained at Illescas, to continue to watch the army of Venegas.

Fresh reports addressed to your majesty on the

* The mounted officers and 14 dragoons, attached to the legion, which had no other cavalry at that time.

† Behind the Guadarama river, three leagues from Madrid.

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4th, by marshal the duke of Belluno, stated that the combined army had not yet advanced, that it had only pushed on some cavalry towards Santa Olalla, and that the corps which was at Numbella was not supported by a considerable body, as it had been reported that it would. The marshal added, that he had made arrangements for attacking general Wilson, at Numbella, on the morning of the 5th.

Your majesty left Mostoloz in the night between the 4th and 5th, to proceed towards Valdemoro. General Sebastiani received orders to advance likewise, with the 4th corps, from Illescas to Valdemoro, where your majesty immediately directed it to pursue the road of Aranjuez, in order to attack the advanced guard of the army of Vanegas, which was on the right bank of the Tagus, between that river and the Tajona. Your majesty's orders were executed. The advanced guard of Venegas, 10,000 strong, was routed, and obliged to fall back on the left bank of the Tagus. The enemy destroyed his bridges. On the 6th, the 4th corps and the reserve remained in their position.

Marshal the duke of Belluno, by letter of the 5th of August, acquainted your majesty that Vialatte's division, which had been directed to attack general Wilson at Numbella, had found no enemy there; that general Wilson had retired on the 4th; and that the inhabitants of Numbella stated his re-

treat to have been occasioned by the arrival of a corps of French troops at Placentia*.

Marshal the duke of Belluno went on the 6th to Santa Olalla, from which place he acquainted your majesty that the Anglo-Spanish army had quitted Talavera on the 4th, proceeding towards Placentia ; that the cavalry of the 1st corps would that day (the 6th) reach Talavera ; and that general Wellesley had recommended to him 4000 wounded, whom he had been obliged to leave behind him in that town.

Marshal the duke of Belluno advanced on the 7th to Talavera, with his whole corps of the army. The same day the cavalry of the 1st corps formed a junction at Oropesa, and at Puerte de l'Arzobispo, with the troops of the duke of Dalmatia.

BULLETIN FROM THE LONDON GAZETTE OF SEPTEMBER 9TH, 1809.

Downing-street, September 7, 1809.

Despatches, of which the following are copies and extracts, were this day received at the office of viscount Castlereagh, one of his

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* This was the first information that the enemy received of Soult's movements, so that the operations of the Lusitanian Legion prevented a junction between the French army and Soult's corps until the 7th ; and thus enabled the uninterrupted movements and subsequent retreat of the combined Anglo-Spanish army over the Tagus.

Bulletin from
the London
Gazette.

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majeaty's principal secretaries of state, from lieutenant-general viscount Wellington, K. B.

Truxillo, August 21, 1809.

My Lord,

When I marched from Talavera on the 3d instant, with a view to oppose the French corps which we had heard had passed through the Puerte de Banos, and had arrived at Placentia, sir Robert Wilson was detached upon the left of the army, towards Escalona; and before I marched on that morning, I put him in communication with the Spanish general Cuesta, who it had been settled was to remain at Talavera. I understood that general Cuesta put sir Robert in communication with his advanced guard, which retired from Talavera on the night of the 4th.

Sir Robert Wilson, however, did not arrive at Valada till the night of the 4th, having made a long march through the mountains; and as he was then six leagues from the bridge of Arzobispo, and had to cross the high road from Oropesa to Talavera, of which the enemy was in possession, he conceived that he was too late to retire to Arzobispo, and he determined to move by Venta St. Julien and Centinello towards the Tietar, and across that river towards the mountains which separate Castille from Estremadura.

Some of sir Robert Wilson's despatches having

missed me, I am not aware by which of the passes he went through the mountains, but I believe by Tornavacas *.

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the London
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He arrived, however, at Banos on the 11th, and on the 12th was attacked and defeated by the French corps of marshal Ney, which, with that of Soult, returned to Placentia on the 9th, 10th, and 11th, that of Ney having since gone on towards Salamanca.

I enclose sir Robert Wilson's account of the action. He has been very active, intelligent, and useful, in the command of the Portuguese and Spanish corps with which he was detached from this army.

Before the battle of the 28th of July, he had pushed his parties almost to the gates of Madrid, with which city he was in communication; and he would have been in Madrid if I had not thought it proper to call him in, in expectation of that general action which took place on the 28th of July. He afterwards alarmed the enemy on the right of his army; and, throughout the service, shewed himself to be an active and intelligent partisan, well acquainted with the country in which he was acting, and possessing the confidence of the troops which he commanded.

* Sir Robert Wilson was obliged to recross the Tietar, to drive from Aldea Nueva a detachment of the enemy occupying that town, and to carry by storm, at night, the village of Viranda, strongly occupied by the enemy, and then to pass over the Sierra Llana, a ridge of mountains eternally covered with snow: from thence he proceeded to Bohoyo, Barco d'Avila, Bejar, and Banos.

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Being persuaded that his retreat was not open by Arzobispo, he acted right in taking the road he did, with which he was well acquainted ; and although unsuccessful in the action which he fought, (which may well be accounted for by the superior numbers and description of the enemy's troops,) the action, in my opinion, does him great credit.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

Miranda de Castenar, August 13, 1809.

Sir,

I have the honour to acquaint you that I was on march yesterday morning on the road of Grenadella from Aldea Nueva, to restore my communication with the allied army, when a peasant assured us that a considerable quantity of dust, which we perceived in the road of Placentia, proceeded from the march of a body of the enemy.

I immediately returned and took post in front of Banos, with my picquets in advance of Aldea Nueva, selecting such points for defence as the exigency of the time permitted.

The enemy's cavalry advanced on the high road, and drove back my small cavalry posts : but a picquet of Spanish infantry, which I had concealed, poured in on the cavalry a steady and well-directed fire, that killed and wounded many of them.

The two hundred Spanish infantry in advance of Aldea Nueva continued, under the direction of

colonel Grant and their officers, to maintain their ground most gallantly, until the enemy's cavalry and chasseurs à cheval, in considerable bodies, appeared on both flanks, when they were obliged to retreat.

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The enemy's chasseurs à cheval and cavalry advanced in great numbers in every direction, and pushed to cut off the legion posted between Aldea Nueva and Banos; but, by the steady conduct of officers and men, the enemy could only advance gradually, and with a very severe loss from the commanding fire thrown on them.

The Merida battalion, however, having given way on the right, a road was laid open, which cut behind our position, and I was obliged to order a retreat on the heights above Banos, when I was again necessitated to detach a corps, in order to scour the road of Monte Major, by which I saw the enemy directing a column, and which road turned altogether the Puerto de Banos, a league in our rear.

At this time don Carlos marquis de Estragne came up with his battalion of light infantry, and, in the most gallant manner, took post along the heights commanding the road of Banos, which enabled me to send some of the Merida battalion on the mountain on our left, commanding the main road, and which the enemy had tried to ascend.

The battalion of light infantry, the detachment of the legion on its right, continued, notwithstanding

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the enemy's fire of artillery and musketry, to maintain their ground; but, at six o'clock in the evening, three columns of the enemy mounted the height on our left, gained it, and poured such a fire on the troops below, that longer defence was impracticable, and the whole was obliged to retire on the mountains on our left, leaving open the main road, along which a considerable column of cavalry immediately poured.

The battalion of Seville had been left at Bejar, with orders to follow me next day; but when I was obliged to return, and the action commenced, I ordered it to Puerto Banos, to watch the Monte Major road and the heights in the rear of our left.

When the enemy's cavalry came near, an officer and some dragoons called out to the commanding officer to surrender; but a volley killed him and his party, and then the battalion proceeded to mount the heights, in which movement it was attacked and surrounded by a column of cavalry and a column of infantry, but cut its way and cleared itself, killing a great many of the enemy, especially of his cavalry.

The enemy is now passing to Salamanca with great expedition. I lament that I could no longer arrest his progress: but, when the enormous superiority of the enemy's force is considered, and that we had no artillery, and that the Puerto de Banos, on the Estremaduran side, is not a pass of such strength as on the side of Castille, especially without guns, I hope that a resistance for nine

hours, which must have cost the enemy a great many men, will not be deemed inadequate to our means.

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I have to acknowledge the services rendered me on this occasion by colonel Grant, major Reiman, don Fermen Marquis, adjutant-major of the dragoons of Pavia, captain Charles and Mr. Bolman; and to express the greatest approbation of two companies of the Merida battalions advanced in front, and of the commanding officer and soldiery of the battalions of Seville, and the Portuguese brigades. I have already noticed the distinguished conduct of don Carlos, and his battalion merits the highest encomiums.

I have not yet been able to collect the returns of our loss. From the nature of mountain warfare, many men are missing who cannot join for a day or two; but I believe the enemy will only have to boast that he has achieved his passage, and his killed and wounded will be a great diminution of his victory.

I have the honour to be, &c.

ROBERT WILSON*.

Sir A. Wellesley, &c. &c. &c.

EXTRACTS FROM THE MONITEUR.

Marshal Soult to the Governor of Avila.

Wilson's corps is cut off, and cannot escape; if you send 1500 men to Candeladria, it must surrender †.

Extracts from
the Moniteur.

* Should any part of this letter have been given before, it cannot be too often repeated.

† The same notice was sent to marshal Jourdan, Joseph Buonaparte, and other generals.

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Extracts from
the *Moniteur*.

Report of the Duke of Elchingen to Marshal Soult.

On the 8th, while the army was taking the bridge of Arzobispo, I had detachments on the right bank of the Tietar, near Villa Nueva, to watch the corps of the English general, Wilson.

On the 12th, the corps of the army set out, *en masse*, from Placentia. On reaching Oliva, I learnt the enemy occupied in force Aldea Nueva, and principally the heights and defiles of Banos. My advanced guard, under general Lorcet, composed of voltigeurs of the 25th light infantry, 2750; 59th regiment of the line, 23d dragoons, and 15th of hussars, a battalion of light artillery. Colonel Armano's brigade of dragoons, &c. actually fell in with the enemy at Aldea Nueva. The attack and success were equally rapid. The position was taken, and the 3d hussars made an admirable charge. The routed enemy rejoined, in small companies, his principal corps on the heights of Banos. These were occupied by general Wilson with 4000 or 5000 men. That general, who considered his position impregnable, had added to the difficulties of ground, by obstructing the accessible paths with abattis, ditches, and masses of rock. As soon as the artillery of the army had closed at Banos, they marched against the enemy, and forgot their fatigues. The 59th and 60th regiments advanced against the heights with great boldness, and made themselves masters of the heights, which were obstinately defended.

General Wilson, however, rallied his troops for

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the third time, and even endeavoured again to act on the offensive, hoping to overthrow us in his turn ; but this attempt was extremely disastrous to himself. The advanced guard had united, and an engagement with the bayonet commenced, in which the enemy was overwhelmed.

The hussars and chasseurs assisted in putting him completely to the rout : in short, this little corps, which left 1200 in the field, is entirely destroyed. Our dragoons fought on foot on several occasions, and distinguished themselves. The artillery also behaved well. The loss that we have sustained in the late battles amounts to 5 officers, and 30 subalterns and privates, killed ; 10 officers, and 140 subalterns and privates, wounded ; several dropped dead in the ranks from heat and fatigue.

Monsieur di Terrier l'Enque, colonel of the 3d hussars, distinguished himself in several charges, and that regiment lost 40 horses. Colonel Cosel, of the 59th infantry, killed an officer, who, while charging, attempted to take his horse.

While these details describe the gallantry of the British troops with due advantage, the discussion thus continues with the allies :—

Oct. 3, 1809.

Sir,

I have given an account to the supreme central junta of government in the kingdom of the note which your excellency was pleased to address to me, under date the 8th of September

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the marquis
Wellesley.

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last, in which your excellency having detailed various reflections and complaints respecting the deficiency of means of subsistence and of transport in the British army, as well as of military co-operation on the part of the Spanish generals, declares, in the name of the British government, that the army commanded by sir A. Wellesley has never been succoured by the civil authorities, nor aided by the military power of Spain, in any degree sufficient to place it in a condition to fight the French forces which have been opposed to it in the field, and that these motives alone have compelled sir A. Wellesley to retire within the reach of more adequate assistance, and to resume the defence of Portugal, as the only object of his immediate operations; and his majesty, being informed very much in detail of all which your excellency has been pleased to express on each of the points of which you treat, instructs me to reply to your excellency, that from the very moment at which the approach to Spain of the English auxiliary army, commanded by general sir A. Wellesley, was made known to the department of finance, it has not ceased to give and repeat the most conclusive and urgent instructions, in order that it might suffer no want in the towns which it passed, or where it was cantoned, the constituted authorities being charged to treat it every where in the manner which so worthy and generous an ally merits. To this effect the inhabitants of Estremadura and the supreme junta of Badajos were forewarned on the 10th of last June to

make the most abundant supplies of all the articles necessary for the subsistence of those troops, and to stimulate the patriotism of the justices, corporations, and individuals of that province, in order that they might contribute to a service so important and indispensable.

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The intendant of the army of Old Castille received the same commission at the proper period with regard to the towns of his district; as did the junta of Placentia, and other persons of character and reputation; notice being given to all these that they were to correspond with don Juan Lozano Torres, minister of the royal finance, who was appointed to the said army, and to whom the necessary instructions were given. He was likewise instructed to go and meet it on the frontiers of Spain, as he did, with the proper commissaries of war, and other persons, from the offices of accounts, who were to be employed in furnishing the said army with every thing it required. The ministers did not forget to renew this commission incessantly to the office of general directions of royal provisions, before and after the junction of that army with our own; and on the 28th last June, don Alexandro Garcia Gomez, with others, was commissioned for the purchase of sheep and horned cattle, being furnished with the requisite funds for that and for the supply of wheat, flour, barley, and other articles. Besides these precautions, provisions more than sufficient were collected, at all points, to subsist that army

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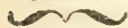
for the short period during which it could, in the opinion of government, remain in the desolated and unhealthy towns of Estremadura, since it was supposed that, in union with our own, it would attack and overthrow the enemy, as happened in the fields of Talavera, by advancing immediately into the lands of Toledo, and the country of the Castilles, where, at the distance of four leagues from their position, they would meet with universal abundance, and the towns prepared to satisfy all the wants of the combined armies. The event has not been so flattering as we might have hoped; the English army retired, re-crossing the Tagus, and placed itself in a country where it was least to be expected, according to the plan of the campaign. From the moment at which this retreat was undertaken, general sir A. Wellesley began to require that his army should be provided with all that was necessary, threatening, if it were not so, to quit entirely the Spanish territory. We endeavoured to tranquillize him on this point by the prompt remittance of various articles, and by the assurance of continuing such remittances. Besides these precautions, a troop of biscuit-makers was sent to place themselves in the neighbourhood of that army, and to work in the fabric of that article for the consumption of those troops; without prejudice to the establishment of a magazine, which had been previously granted, of 300,000 or 400,000 pounds of the same article, which that general had

required, and which was to be placed in that situation. A certain number of quintals of salt meat was likewise transmitted to them, which would have been continued to the amount of 1,006 quintals, that quantity having been collected here; 12,000 sheets were likewise sent, and the 1500 mattresses of wool which had been ordered to be made in the general deposit of cloathing, of which part was destined to the use of those troops. Repeated remittances of rice, salt fish, cheese, flour, barley, sheep, and biscuit, were made by the office of general direction of provisions, and by the minister of royal finance with the said army, according to the statements which I have the honour to enclose to your excellency, and which demonstrate the abundance which ought to exist in that army, if orders were observed in the use and distribution of those articles. The department has not been less active in providing mules of burden and carts for the use of the same army. Since the 3d of last June, long before its entrance into Spain, the superior junta of Badajoz and the intendant of the province were instructed to collect the largest possible number of both. The intendant of the army of Old Castille received the same commission. Recently, after treating with persons of practice and intelligence on this subject, the commander of the guards, don Juan Megual de Jyca, and don Jose Antonio Cevallos, were commissioned to procure and remit to that army, from all sides, the largest

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possible number of mules of burden. The proper commission for carts was given to don Jose Fortien ; the justices being ordered to furnish them with every assistance, whenever the owners of those articles should resist any equitable demand, or should decline their aid to a service so important in the critical circumstances of the day. The result of these arrangements has been the remittance of two brigades, consisting each of 40 mules of burden ; 22 horses of the same description, collected here ; 700 mules from Castille, with those which have been transmitted by Igea and Cevallos, and of which the number is unknown ; together with ten brigades of ten each, without taking into the account several others. Your excellency may be assured that these succours considerably exceed the demands which have been made ; and it cannot be doubted that the supply of provisions has been continued subsequently to the dates of the said statements.

The Spanish government proves by these facts their vigilance in the fulfilment of the duties which fell to their lot. Perhaps a deficiency may have been remarked in some one article ; but the blame can never be imputed to them, for they could never have been expected to collect provisions on a spot through which the English army should have only passed. Even after the unexpected determination of sir A. Wellesley to retire from Spain, offers were made to him by the commissioner of subsistence in his army, and by persons of the

highest character, to provide him with all that was necessary in the short space of some days, and in fifteen to establish magazines of stores for two months. If this plan was not accomplished, the reason is without doubt the following: that sir A. Wellesley having resolved to retire from Spain, and such being the deliberate will of your excellency, you will perceive, in your discretion, that it was, as I had the honour to inform you, an expense which might be spared, while the nation was compelled to attend with few resources to so many quarters. Your excellency will believe that any hope, which would have ensured to the government a prompt co-operation on the part of the English army, would have inspired the whole impulse of activity which was required for affording assistance to it; and the same would happen at the present time, at the cost of the greatest sacrifices, if it were but assured that those sacrifices would not be fruitless.

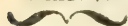
With respect to the want of military co-operation on the part of our generals, of which your excellency complains, it appears from the war department, that, as soon as it knew the approach of a British army in aid of our cause, the necessary orders were given to the captains-general to make all the preparations adapted to the best treatment and convenience of the troops; and the general don Gregorio de la Cuesta gave information on the 10th of last July that he had the honour to receive

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sir A. Wellesley that evening, with whom he was in very good understanding, having agreed with him on the plan of operations, and having informed him that he only waited the ultimate return of his troops, and the removal of some difficulties respecting the means of transport, in order to commence those operations ; although, in consequence of the movements which the enemy had recently made, he was preparing his army for the passage of the Tietar, to menace his rear and flank.

The good understanding between the two generals continued, as may be seen in the official note of the 15th from Cuesta, in which he said that he had agreed with sir A. Wellesley on the movement of the combined armies: the Spanish army to fall on Talavera, while the English army moved at the same time on the left flank, on the road of Escalona, in order that all the armies might make a combined movement. Cuesta was informed, on the 18th, of the instructions which were sent to the marquis de la Romana, as soon as it was known that Galicia and the Asturias had been evacuated by the enemy. He was likewise informed of the wishes which general Beresford had expressed, and the observations he had made, respecting the position he should take, in order that he might acquaint general Wellesley with the whole, with the supposition that Beresford would act under the command of that general, with whom Cuesta was to operate in agreement, as he understood that his

majesty desired the preservation of all possible harmony, and that he should pay respect to general Wellesley's opinions. Such have always been the instructions which were sent to that general; and although on his part nothing had been left undone for the convenience of the English troops, he gave notice, on the 17th, that general Wellesley complained of the wants of the means of transport, and that he said that it was impossible for him to remain in such a condition. As, notwithstanding the best arrangements, it was not easy to provide on the spot for all the wants of an army, which it was calculated would bring with it the necessary means for its movement, suitable precautions were taken at this place to provide for its exigencies; and, in effect, an answer was returned to Cuesta, that four troops of cavalry were on the point of departing for Santa Olalla, which by different routes, and with pressing orders for the justices, would provide the mules of burden which they could procure, each town being obliged to give up two parts of the three it possessed, with severe penalties for those which resisted or refused; and, in order that they might have no exculpation, the commander of the troops would carry money to pay for the animals. As it was well known that towns that had been for the most part occupied by the enemy, and had by that means been ruined, could not afford the requisite number of mules, the intendant of that province was ordered to send to the army the third part of the mules of burden which

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existed in its towns, the junta of Badajoz to make every exertion to provide them, and the commissaries were charged to purchase barley. They sent 500 fanegas for the moment, and proceeded in the plan of sending all the supplies they could meet with. A receipt for the number of mules received, which was given by the English commissary general in Talavera, proves sufficiently that these arrangements were not useless.

General Cuesta was also informed that these arrangements were not to stand in the way of those which he might be able to make of his own accord, with the use of force, in case it was necessary. With the intent of proving to general Wellesley the true desire of the Spanish government for the assistance of his army, Cuesta was instructed to inform him of the said arrangements, and of the persuasion of his majesty that there could not be any other motive for the resistance of the towns of which he complained but the incapacity in which they had been left by the ravages of the enemy, and the casual occurrence of harvest time. His majesty was in some degree tranquillized by information from Cuesta that on the 18th the armies were in motion, and on the 22d they were in the neighbourhood of the enemy, who had fortified himself at the bridge of the Alberche. Neither these, nor other previous circumstances, were unfortunately sufficient to tranquillize the mind of his majesty, since, on the 27th, a note was presented, which your excellency transmitted from general Wellesley, dated from Ta-

lavera, declaring the want of provisions, and of the means of transport, which was suffered by the army under his command ; while the Spanish army lived in abundance, and even the French prisoners and their horses. This note was sent to general Cuesta, with orders not to omit any precaution which would conduce to the prompt succour of those troops ; and that he should give information of the cause of the deficiency, after the very active measures which had been taken. Cuesta replied to this order on the 1st of August, saying, that he thought that note at least very much exaggerated with respect to the abundance in which the Spanish army lived, with its French prisoners and their horses ; that the Spanish army patiently endured the scarcity occasioned by the want of money, and the rapidity of the marches ; and that there neither was, nor had been, any French prisoner, who possessed a horse ;—that the Spanish cavalry had consumed barley when it could be procured, and that herbage had been its general nourishment ; that there had been several days on which it had been scarcely possible to give out to the troops a ration of a quarter of a pound of bread ; and that such a life is far from a life of abundance ;—that the English army never had suffered such scarcity ; and that he, individually, had received no information of its wants, as there was a Spanish commissary for that army, absolute in his powers, and that he collected provisions by means of his own

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commissaries ;—that for this reason he had sent for the intendant commissary, in order to take information on this branch, and to assist him in all the arrangements which depended on himself ; and he found that he had never been able to know the number of rations which the English army required, nor that which it consumed ; while he assured Cuesta that it was at least double of that which was wanted ;—that he could not obtain receipts for the towns, or the commissary, of all the articles furnished ;—that having offered to pay all, as they received it, they had not done so up to that period, nor had chosen to accept contracts for flesh, of which offers had been made to them ;—that in such circumstances, and having perceived the disorder and insubordination which prevailed, he had called together the said intendant commissary, with the intendant and purveyor of the Spanish army, in order to consult with them on the most expedient manner of checking those faults and deficiencies ; and they agreed that the towns on the left should be destined for the English army, and those to the right for the Spanish, by means of Spanish commissaries from both intendants ;—that the necessary escorts should be given for the security of the provisions ; and that with those that could be procured the English troops should be attended to in preference, although they might not come from their district ; and that he would endeavour to come to an agreement with general Wellesley, that, on his

part, order in the accounts and all possible economy might be introduced.

After the glorious battle of Talavera, in which our allies gave such signal proofs of valour and interest in the just cause which we defend, general Cuesta sent advices, dated the 29th of July, that the enemy had left two corps of considerable number in sight; that he had advanced his van guard to observe them; and that in the mean while his army rested in columns, while some provisions were procured, and the English employed in relieving the wounded were placing themselves in a condition to follow them; that he had given orders to the towns of the districts to furnish them with all the provisions they could collect.

His majesty, unwilling to rely on these arrangements alone for the supply of provisions and means of transport for the armies, thought fit to nominate Signor Calvo, a member of the supreme junta, who, with the full powers that were given to him, was enabled to arrange all the necessary points for the best provisionment of the same. His nomination was made known to general Cuesta on the 1st of August, together with the royal order of the same date, which was sent to the justices of the places on the route from this capital to Talavera, Badajos, and Placentia, to send, without any excuse, all the provisions they possessed, by post, with an understanding that commissioners were to be named to seize those which were kept back.

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When intelligence was received that marshal Soult was marching to the Puerto de Banos, general Wellesley applied to Cuesta to reinforce that point; and although in his opinion with small advantage, he said that he had despatched the fifth division, with 300 horse, in order to impede the passage of Soult, if it arrived in time, notwithstanding his expectation that general Beresford, with 15,000 men, would harass and intercept him, or that, at all events, that general would retard the march of Soult. Nothing of this kind happened; for general Beresford not having appeared, and the Spanish troops which covered the Puerto de Banos finding themselves alone, were compelled to retire towards the Tietar, and the enemy arrived at Placentia. On this account Cuesta agreed with sir A. Wellesley that the English army should march against Soult, and the Spanish remain in Talavera. General Wellesley marched; but Cuesta knowing afterwards by intercepted letters that Soult was ordered to reach Placentia, and thus to direct his attack against the English, and this being confirmed by a movement of Victor, it was his natural opinion, on a consideration of data so solid, that the English not being alone sufficient to oppose 25 or 30,000 men, which, according to all the intercepted letters, he must suppose Soult to have, it was his opinion to hasten to the aid of his good ally, general Wellesley, either to prevent his defeat, or, if that disastrous event happened, to pre-

vent himself, Cuesta, from being placed between Victor and Soult, with a certainty of the same lot, and being well assured that, if he remained in Talavera, that same destiny awaited him. Determined by these considerations to march on the 3d, he joined the English army at Oropesa, a circumstance which surprised him, as he supposed them to be in search of the enemy, who was then in Naval Moral; and still more was he surprised to find general Wellesley resolved not to attack Soult, suspecting that he had more forces than even report gave to him, and declaring that he would not engage without having a secure retreat, for which reason he was projecting to take up a position on the other side of the Puerto del Arzobispo. Cuesta replied to him, that the enemy had not a force sufficient to resist both armies; that being now united, they could without difficulty give him the law; and that by a retreat to the Puerto a free passage would be allowed to him to reinforce Victor.

General Wellesley, being posted at the bridge, altered his position on the 5th to the Mesa d'Ibor. Afterwards he passed with his army to Deleytosa, having his van guard at the Puerto de Almaraz, and Cuesta on the 9th passed to the Mesa d'Ibor and Fresnodoso. On the 11th he proposed to general Wellesley the formation of a general magazine at Truxillo, where the necessary supplies might be equitably distributed to both armies. This proposal was repeated by general Eguia, immediately

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after he took the command; and it being agreed to, commissioners were named on the 15th for both parties to regulate the articles of subsistence in Truxillo, and their distributions, although with a preference in favour of the English. The commissaries were employed in the said regulations; and their exertions were so effectual, that they provided the British army with all it required, of which general Wellesley was informed by Eguia. The former, however, having complained, on the 17th, of the want of provisions, forewarned the latter to prepare his troops to occupy the ensuing night the positions which were covered by the English, unless he was completely environed on that very day, and his subsistence was assured for the future. And all this, notwithstanding general Wellesley was informed that the 300 mares for which he had applied would be purchased; that we had 700 mules, which should be sent towards the completion of the 1000 for which he had applied; that two brigades of carts were on the march, the remainder being to follow until the 100 were completed. He drew away on the night of the 19th of August the troops which he had near the Puerto de Almaraz, and on the 20th he commenced his march towards Portugal.

The precautions for the supply of every necessary to the army of general Beresford were not less continued or energetic; although the chargé d'affaires of his majesty at Lisbon sent accounts of the

want of provisions which he experienced. This, however, is by no means wonderful; for having altered his route without giving information to the duque del Parque, as he declared, he could not easily meet with the necessary subsistence, particularly in a country which had been so much overrun by the enemy. The duque, however, conferred in Ciudad Rodrigo with Beresford. The intendant of that army came to an agreement with the commissary of general Beresford's army respecting the supply of rations which the latter required; and afterwards, on the 11th of August, when the same general agreed with the duque to vary the position of his army, they smoothed the difficulties which presented themselves for the supply of provisions, arising from the desolation of that country and the scarcity of the season. The duque sent word on the 17th of August that general Beresford, alleging the want of provisions, was projecting a retreat to Portugal; although every imaginable exertion had been made to procure provisions in such a manner, that the agents have returned from some quarters with a superfluity; that although it is certain that some delay had been experienced in some situations, it has been occasioned by the sudden alterations of the routes, for which orders had been despatched, and provisions have been addressed, as it was impossible to convey them post, with the celerity with which the routes were varied.

With a desire of satisfying your excellency, questions were put to general Cuesta respecting the

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wounded English, who remained in the hospitals of Talavera after the retreat of the said general. He answered, that some died before the departure of the armies; that the situation of others was so critical, that humanity did not allow of their removal; that the greater part had been removed to Oropesa, by an arrangement of general Wellesley, with the succours which had been requested of him, and which were given in preference to the Spaniards, in such a manner, that the English commissary was very well satisfied, and returned thanks; that, besides, a considerable number of wounded marched away on foot; and, lastly, that when on the 4th his van guard left Talavera, he was assured by the commandant, Zayas, that he had seen the hospital of St. Augustin evacuated and closed; which hospital had been occupied by the English; and that the officers of the royal finance answered to him, under their signatures*, that they had realized all the supplies in the midst of the scarcity of mules and carts.

It is very difficult, after the foregoing facts, to answer punctually the complaint of want of co-operation in the Spanish generals, while instances are not circumstantially stated. The orders which exist in possession of the generals will prove their instructions to maintain the greatest harmony with our allies, to respect their opinions, and to concede

* In this painful discussion we in vain look for such vouchers, unless in one instance on the part of lord Wellington.

all they could, to any extent, but that of causing any grievous evil to their country. Such are the orders which have been repeatedly given; and, if we speak from the despatches of the generals, we read in those from Cuesta of the 2d of July, that an English officer informed him from Placentia that the British army would pass from Zarza Maior to Coria and Placentia, and requested him to have a bridge thrown over the Tietar for its passage by the Bazagona, and that in consequence he ordered an engineer and workmen to reconnoitre the spot, and to make a report of the work. In another, of the 4th, he said, that the English van guard was at Zarza Maior; and that an English commissary having proved to him that a provisional bridge over the Tietar was requisite for the junction of the two armies, the workmen and utensils necessary for constructing it with all haste departed on the following day, although the river is fordable. In another, of the 5th, he said, that the commissioner don Joseph O'Lawler had explained to him, from Zarza Maior, that general Wellesley conceived it to be expedient that the Spanish troops which occupied Placentia should pass to the Puerto de Banos immediately after the arrival of his army in that place, for which purpose he offered engineers and artillerymen, with the corresponding train; and that he would then make arrangements for sending to the Puerto de Banos the troops necessary to defend it, together with those which were in Ciudad Ro-

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drigo. In another, of the 15th, he said, that he had agreed with general Wellesley on the movements to be made by the combined armies. Lastly, on the 1st of August, he said, in another despatch, that at the earnest request of sir A. Wellesley, although against his own opinion, he sent the fifth division, with 300 cavalry, towards Placentia and the Puerto de Banos, to impede the passage of Soult, (if it arrived in time,) although he hoped that general Beresford, with his 15,000 men, would harass and intercept him.

These, among many others, are data, arguing not only the co-operation but the spirit of union, concord, and energy, in the Spanish generals and government towards our allies. It appears that there can be no greater deference towards them; nor can it be proved in a more conclusive manner than by acting, at the pleasure of our allies, against our own opinion, and for the sole purpose of giving satisfaction to the English generals. The latter may be able perhaps to cite some cases in which the Spaniards have not agreed with them; but neither does the want of absolute complaisance prove the idea or spirit of disunion, nor is all which is claimed practicable on every occasion; but, in whatever manner it may be, the Spanish generals shall answer to their government, if the allies point out to them the cases, and manifest the concerted plans which were abandoned suddenly at the most critical moments of the campaign; since the section of war has no in-

formation of them ; and in the mean while co-operation and concord on its part appear to be proved by the foregoing observations. Cuesta was instructed to treat with general Wellesley respecting the future destination of the marquis de la Romana's troops, with reference to the expressed opinion of general Beresford. Cuesta did so ; and having declared, on the 23d of July, that he was of Beresford's opinion, it was resolved that Romana, with all his disposeable troops, should take up a position in the Carhajales, a spot proposed by Beresford, to whom it was communicated through the chargé d'affaires of his majesty in Lisbon. Cuesta was answered, that, in consequence of general Wellesley's opinion, orders were given to that effect. His majesty moreover instructed me, that the plan which your excellency was pleased to transmit to me, dated the 21st of August, for improving the system of transport, and the mode of supplying the British army employed in Spain, should be immediately adopted. The suitable orders were given for carrying it into effect, for establishing the magazines, and for making the supplies of every necessary article without sparing any expense in the maintenance of the said army, with the supposition of its stay in Spain.

Notwithstanding all these circumstances, sir A. Wellesley has persevered in removing his troops from this country ; but, whatever may be the plans of that military chief, he can never say that inaction, or the want of zeal in the Spanish

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government, has forced him to vary those which that government expected from so generous an ally, who had inspired the enemy himself with fear and respect. This is the exposition which I am instructed by his majesty to lay before your excellency, in reply to your notes of the 30th August and 8th September last, and for your satisfaction with regard to the complaints which your excellency has detailed in the same; and his majesty hopes that, in the facts which are related, your excellency will perceive the energy with which the Spanish government has endeavoured to correspond to the generous efforts of its intimate allies, and the sincerity with which it promotes every thing which can contribute to draw closer the bonds of amity and firm alliance which it has contracted with his Britannic majesty and the English nation.

With these principles, and with a supposition of a decided co-operation, and the formation of a sincere and solid plan of campaign for the armies of the three nations, his majesty will not only listen to the opinion of general Wellesley with the greatest respect and distinction, but, without losing an instant, will so arrange as to put in motion all the resources which the country offers. Possessed with the most ardent desires to gain our liberty and independence, and to destroy our cruel and perfidious enemy, desires which have been effectually proved during the course of a struggle of more than a year, so

unequal and so worthily sustained by the government; whose constancy neither the greatest misfortunes, nor the diminished hopes of the feeble (and indeed greater part) of the nations of Europe, nor the most seductive offers, nor the intrigues of the ill-intentioned have had the power to shake for a single moment.

His majesty hopes that the day is arrived, on which this magnanimous nation is doomed to reap the fruit of its toils and perseverance, and of the generosity of his Britannic majesty. The armies, however feeble they may be represented, when united with the valiant English and Portuguese, are more than double the numbers of those which the enemy retains in Spain at this day. Let us not give time for them to be reinforced. Let numbers, and a sincere desire to drive them from the Peninsula, supply the want of some articles, which time will be able to provide. Let all combine in one plan; and the government, in the name of the nation, offers to its allies the greatest energy in its arrangements and the greatest efficacy in its succours.

Your excellency likewise remarks, that, to the intent "that these offers may be realized, it were necessary to revise the military system; and, above all, that, in order to make any progress, it were indispensable to give energy and efficacy to the executive power, which can never possess sufficient force or activity without the direct assistance of the collective wisdom of the nation, and without

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the aid of that spirit, which must flow from the support of a people, animated with equal sentiments of loyalty and liberty." No person knows better than your excellency what serious consideration is requisite on this subject in the present circumstances; since, through the channel of your excellency, the government has been informed of the desire of some persons to introduce novelties, by the use of means which are not only reprobated by the laws, but which might bring down irreparable injury on the good cause, which both nations defend with so much glory. And your excellency is so deeply convinced of this truth, that, when you had been informed of those projects, your communications to the government, and your individual actions for the purpose of frustrating them, have so largely contributed to that end, that the government cannot consider them with indifference, nor omit giving to your excellency, in return for them, the most express thanks.

The Spanish nation, after having seen her kings perfidiously torn from her bosom, abandoned to herself, her capital, with the tribunal of justice, occupied by the enemy, found that she was compelled to reflect upon her own condition, and on the state of abandonment in which she was placed; and, exerting the right which her situation gave, formed a government, to which all classes of the state have sworn allegiance, and have shown obedience. This plain narrative is a complete proof,

how important and necessary it is to seek for the means of conciliating the plan of a reform, with the different interests which must concur in effecting it, and to deliver the common cause from evils greater than those which we are desiring to avoid. Such is the intention of government, and such has been its occupation for many days. Its situation is by no means common ; and if it succeed in the object, as it desires, without convulsions, and without intestine dissensions, which it would scarcely be possible to escape in any other manner, and which moreover would throw the nation into the hands of the enemy, it will be enabled to give this instance, in addition to so many others, of prudence and moderation ; and to our faithful and generous ally, the king of Great Britain, a testimony of what he may expect from a government, which has known how, in the midst of its calamities, to maintain itself with firmness and energy ; and to keep aloof from the evils which others have suffered, because they did not act with the same caution and deliberation ; and to your excellency, of the value which it places on your enlightened wisdom, and your exertions, which spring from a desire that our affairs may be conducted to the most successful conclusion.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) MARTIN DE GARAY.

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Lord Wellington to lord
Castlereagh.*Dated Lisbon, Oct. 22, 1809.—Received
Nov. 2, 1809.*

My Lord,

Since I addressed your lordship on the 6th instant, I have received accounts that the enemy have collected a corps on the Tagus near Toledo, supposed to consist of 30,000 men, with which they have invaded La Mancha. General Eguia, who commanded the Spanish troops in that quarter, consisting of his own corps which had been in Estremadura, and of general Venegas', retired to Santa Helena, where he was on the 16th instant, and the enemy had not manifested any intention of attacking him. Soult's corps was at Oropesa and Arzobispo, by the last accounts, and Mortier at Talavera; and I conclude that the movement of the whole to their left has been occasioned by the invasion of La Mancha. Ney's corps is still at Salamanca; and the duque del Parque is near Ciudad Rodrigo: he has lately been reinforced by about 800 cavalry, which had been detached from the army of Estremadura, and by the corps of Ballasteros, which had been in the Asturias, and consists of about 7000 men. This corps attacked Zamora on its march southward, but were repulsed; and its march was then directed through Portugal.

I imagine that the late invasion of La Mancha by the French has been occasioned solely by their desire to prevent the Spanish army under general

Eguia from enjoying the resources of that province.

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I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) WELLINGTON.

Lord Viscount Castlereagh, &c. &c.

Seville, Oct. 24, 1809.

Sir,

The condition to which the British army was reduced by the internal state of Spain, during the last campaign, compelled me to submit to your excellency the representations contained in my note of the 8th of September.

Marquis Wellesley to M. de Garay.

Your excellency is fully informed of the urgent motives of public duty which induced me to solicit the attention of the government of Spain to those circumstances in the state of the country which menaced destruction to the common cause, and rendered the co-operation of the British army impracticable. The danger to which the interests of the alliance were exposed required from me a plain exposition of the evils which had occasioned such a calamity, and of the remedies which might be derived from an early interposition of the wisdom of the Spanish government.

With this view, I suggested the necessity of strengthening and amending the frame of the government, by concentrating the executive powers in a more compact form, and by resting that power on the direct support of the collective wisdom of the

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nation, and on the immediate aid of, a due representation of the several estates of the realm.

In offering these suggestions to your excellency's consideration, my intention was not to transgress the bounds of amicable counsel, or to interfere in the independent exercise of the judgment of the Spanish government. The supreme junta, through your excellency's intervention, had repeatedly and earnestly solicited me to assist in promoting the efforts of Spain, by recommending the direct co-operation of the British army. In answer to these solicitations I pointed out, first, the causes which had frustrated the spirited endeavours of the British army in the last campaign: secondly, the only practicable means of placing Spain in a condition to receive the benefit of that species of assistance which she most anxiously desired. The supreme junta has recently given much consideration to these important questions, and has determined to concentrate the executive power, and to assemble the cortes without delay.

Much time, however, has already elapsed, and the peril becomes more imminent, while the true bulwark of defence remains incomplete.

Your excellency has been pleased to inform me that the supreme junta is occupied in the election of a committee of seven of its members, to whom it proposes to delegate the military branch of the executive power, with some reservations. The appointment of such a committee cannot be deemed

a concentration of the executive power must tend to produce additional delay, counteraction, and weakness, in the operations of the government.

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To concentrate in the hands of seven persons the military department of the executive power, while all the other departments of the government shall remain in the whole body of the junta, is to separate one essential branch of the executive power from the main body of the government, and to detach from the whole a part essential to its combined strength.

Unity of council and of action (the main source of vigour and activity) cannot be secured, unless the several branches of the executive power be united.

The strength of each branch essentially depends on mutual aid and reciprocal connexion. Nor can any branch of the executive power, severed from the rest, possess the same degree of force which might belong to it, when combined in the general system of executive government, where each part contributes to the strength and efficacy of the whole.

I cannot therefore expect that even the military department will gain any degree of alacrity or promptitude by this new separation from the general frame of the executive government; nor can I hope that any concentrated strength will result to the remaining departments from a mere division of power; which breaks the collective force of the en-

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tire administration, without any benefit either to the departments which continue in the hands of the junta, or to that which is taken from them.

The military section of the supreme junta was perhaps a more convenient instrument of administration, and it possessed the advantage of a more compact form, as its number was less than that of the proposed committee.

In every view the division of the junta into sections for the despatch of business is less objectionable than the positive separation of a branch of the executive power from the government. If the proposed committee could be considered as a new form of executive power, or a new executive council of regency, the number of its members would constitute an insuperable objection to its structure.

The executive council should not consist of more than five members at the utmost; if limited to three members, a stronger hope might be entertained of its efficiency; but the new committee is not an executive council,—it is a mere military commission, with limited powers.

It is my duty to declare to your excellency that the appointment of this committee affords me no confidence in the promised correction of any of those evils of which I complained in my note of the 8th of September, nor furnishes any security to the British army in any operation within the Spanish territories.

Your excellency has further been pleased to in-

form me, that it is intended to issue the summons for the assembly of the cortes on the 1st of January, and that the assembly is actually to meet on the 1st of March, 1810.

Your excellency's communication authorizes me to use, on the most interesting point, the same freedom of amicable counsel which I have already exercised respecting the nominal concentration of the executive power.

The intention of assembling the cortes was announced in the month of May, 1809. It will be difficult to persuade the world that all the necessary regulations with a view to that important event might not have been completed before the month of March, 1810. I am well aware of the absolute necessity of preparing the principal rules and orders for the regular despatch of business in the cortes before that assembly shall meet ; but it would have been highly desirable that the utmost degree of expedition should have been used in calling the aid of the cortes to support the executive power in the great work of delivering the Spanish nation from the French usurpation, and of restoring the independence of the monarchy, together with the prosperity and happiness of the people.

These objects are inseparable from the interests of the alliance ; and it is therefore with the deepest regret that I witness any course of proceedings tending to procrastinate those improvements in the condition of Spain, which alone can enable her to

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receive the auxiliary armies of Great Britain. Your excellency is fully apprized of my sentiments with respect to the exigency of the present crisis in Spain ; my solicitude for the stability of the alliance has already induced me (under your excellency's encouragement) to explain distinctly principles and opinions, which cannot be satisfied by the present course of proceedings. I take the liberty of referring your excellency to a paper which I had the honour of communicating to you confidentially some time ago, and of which I now request you to make any use that you may deem advantageous to the public service. In that paper I did not express a wish to see the military branch of the government separated from the main body of the executive power, under the directions of a committee of seven members ; but I submitted to your excellency the expediency of uniting every branch of the executive power in the hands of a council, to consist of not more than five persons, and to be selected either from the body of the junta or from the nation at large, with reference, exclusively, to the character and qualifications of the persons to be elected.

I recommend that this council of regency should exercise the executive power until the cortes should be assembled. Secondly, that the cortes should be assembled with the least possible delay. Thirdly, that the supreme central junta, or such members of it as should not be of the council of

regency, should constitute a deliberate council, for the purpose of superintending the electing of the cortes, and of preparing for that body, with the assent of the council of regency, such business as may be deemed proper to submit to its early consideration. Fourthly, that the same act of the junta, by which the regency shall be appointed and the cortes called, shall contain the principal articles of redress of grievances, corrections of abuses, and the relief of exactions in Spain and the Indies, and also the heads of such concessions to the colonies as shall fully secure to them a due share in the representative body of the Spanish empire. Fifthly, that the first act of the regency should be to issue the necessary orders for correcting the whole system of the military department in Spain.

Your excellency will judge whether the communications which I had the honour to receive from you last night (respecting the nomination of a committee of seven members, and the assembly of the cortes on the 1st of March, 1810) accord in any degree with my anxious solicitude for an improvement in the general condition of Spain; and whether it would be consistent with my declared sentiments to offer to your excellency any expectations of the co-operation of the British army in Spain, while every evil of which I have complained remains without hope of remedy. With the most

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sincere respect, and with sentiments of the highest esteem and consideration,

I have the honour to remain, sir,

Your excellency's most obedient
and faithful servant,

(Signed)

WELLESLEY.

Badajos, Oct. 30, 1809.

My Lord,

Lord viscount
Wellington to
the marquis
Wellesley.

Recapitulation
of the circum-
stances of the
British army.

I have had the honour of receiving your excellency's despatch (marked I.) of the 17th instant, containing a copy of your note to M. de Garay of the 8th of September, and a copy of his note, in answer to your excellency's of the 3d of October.

I am not surprised that M. de Garay should endeavour to attribute to the irregularities of the English commissariat the deficiencies of supplies and means of transport experienced by the British army, in its late services in Spain. I am not disposed to justify the English commissariat where they deserve blame, but I must think it but justice to them to declare that the British army is indebted to their exertions for the scanty supplies it received.

From some of the statements contained in M. de Garay's note, it would appear that the British army had suffered no distress during the late service; others have a tendency to prove that great distress was suffered at a very early period by both

armies, particularly the quotation of a letter from general Cuesta of the 1st of August, in answer to a complaint which I am supposed to have made, that the Spanish troops and their prisoners were better supplied than the British army. The answer to all these statements is a reference to the fact, that the army suffered great distress for want of provisions, forage, and means of equipment; and, although that great distress might have been aggravated, it could not have been occasioned by the inexperience or irregularity of the English commissariat.

I know nothing of the orders which M. de Garay states were sent by the government to the different provincial juntas to provide provisions and means of transport for the British army, on its passage through the different towns in the provinces. If such orders were sent, it is obvious that the central junta, as a government, have no power or influence over the provincial juntas and magistrates to whom their orders were addressed, as they produced no effect; and the supplies, such as they were, were procured only by the requisition and exertions of the British commissaries. But it is obvious, from M. de Garay's accounts of these orders, that the central junta had taken a very erroneous view of the operations to be carried on by the army, and of the provision to be made for the troops while engaged in those operations. The government provided by their orders for the troops

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only while on the passage through the towns, relying upon their immediate success, and making no provision for the collection in one body of not less than 50,000 men, even for one day. At the same time that they were guilty of this unpardonable omission, which paralyzed all our efforts, they rendered that success doubtful by countermanding the orders given to general Venegas by general Cuesta, and thus exposing the combined armies to the general action with the enemy's concentrated force. The effect of their orders will appear more fully in the following detail.

As soon as the line of my operations in Spain was decided, I sent a commissary to Ciudad Rodrigo, to endeavour to procure mules to attend the army, in concert with don Lozano des Torres, that city and its neighbourhood being the places in which the army commanded by the late sir John Moore had been most largely supplied. M. de Garay expresses the astonishment of the government that the British army should have entered Spain unprovided with the means of transport, notwithstanding that, a few paragraphs preceding this expression of astonishment, he informs your excellency, in the name of the government, that they had given orders to the provincial juntas of Badajoz and Castille (at Ciudad Rodrigo), and the magistrates, to provide and supply us with the means, which of course they must have been aware that we should require. No army can carry on its ope-

rations, if unprovided with means of transport; and the British army was, from circumstances, particularly in want at that moment.

The means of transport commonly used in Portugal are drawn by bullocks, which are unable, without great distress, to move more than twelve miles in a day, a distance much shorter than that which the state of the country in which the army was to carry on operations in Spain, and the nature of the country, would oblige the army to march. The number of carts which we had been able to bring from Portugal was not sufficient to draw our ammunition, and there were none to carry provisions.


Having failed in procuring at Ciudad Rodrigo, and in the neighbourhood, the means of transport which I required, I wrote to general O'Donoghue on the 16th of July a letter, in which, after stating our wants, and the failure of the country in supplying, I gave notice, that, if they were not supplied, I should discontinue my co-operation with general Cuesta, after I should have performed my part in the first operation which we had concerted, viz. the removal of the enemy from the Alberche; and that, if not supplied as I required, I should eventually withdraw from Spain altogether. From this letter of the 16th of July it will appear that I called for the supplies, and gave notice that I should withdraw from Spain if they were not furnished, not only long previous to the retreat across

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the Tagus on the 4th of August, but even previous to the commencement of the operations of the campaign.

Notwithstanding that this letter of the 16th of July was communicated to the central junta, both Mr. Frere and general Cuesta, the British army has to this day received no assistance of this description from Spain, excepting twenty carts, which joined at Merida, ten on the 30th of August, and ten on the 2d September, and about three hundred mules, of about five hundred which were hired at Bejar, and joined at a subsequent period. None of the mules stated to have been hired and despatched to the army from Seville, or by Igea or Cevallos, or the two brigades of forty each, or the horses, have ever joined the British army; and I conclude they are with the Spanish army of Estremadura, as are the remainder of the (100) ten brigades of carts, which were intended and are marked for the British army. But none of these mules or carts reached Estremadura till after the 21st of August, the day on which, after five weeks' notice, I was obliged to separate from the Spanish army. It is not true, therefore, that my resolution to withdraw from Spain, as then carried into execution, was "sudden," or ought to have surprised the government; nor does it appear to have been perilous, from what has since occurred in this part of Spain. Accordingly, I marched on the 18th of July from Placentia, the soldiers carrying on their backs their provisions, to

the 21st, on which day a junction was formed with general Cuesta's army, and from that day to the 24th of August the troops or their horses did not receive one regular ration. The irregularity and deficiency both in quality and quantity were so great, that I considered it a matter of justice to the troops to remit to them, during that period, half of the sum usually stopped from their pay for rations.

The forage given to the horses was picked up for them by their riders wherever they could find it, and was generally wheat or rye, which are considered unwholesome food; and the consequence was, that, exclusive of the loss by engaging with the enemy, the army lost in the short period of five weeks not less than 1,500 horses.

The orders stated to have been given by the central to the provincial juntas and magistrates were not more effectual in procuring provisions than in procuring means of transport. In the interval between the 15th and 21st of July, the British commissaries had made contracts with the magistrates of the different villages in the Vera de Placentia, a country abounding in resources of every description, for the delivery at Talavera, on different days before the 24th of July, of 250,000 rations of provisions. These contracts were not performed; the British army was consequently unable to move in pursuit of the enemy when he retired on that day, and I conclude that the French army have since subsisted on these resources.

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The British army never received any salt meat, nor any of the rice or other articles stated to have been sent from Seville for their use, excepting to make up the miserable ration by which the men were only prevented from starving, during the period to which I have adverted ; nor was it amended by the troops of "Biscuit-bakers," nor did it enjoy any of the advantages of their labours ; nor was the supposed magazine of 400,000 pounds of biscuit ever formed. These are notorious facts, which cannot be disputed, of the truth of which every officer and soldier in the army can bear testimony.

Lieutenant-colonel Waters had, by my desire, made an arrangement with the Spanish commissariat for the division of the magazine at Truxillo between the two armies ; and he, as well as I, was satisfied with the principle and detail of that arrangement. But if the British army received only one-third of a ration on the 18th of August, and only one-half of a ration on the 19th, not of bread, but of flour ; if the horses of the army received nothing, and if the state of the magazines at Truxillo was such at that time as to hold out no hope, not of improvement, but of a full and regular supply of provisions and forage of all descriptions,—I was justified in withdrawing from Spain. In point of fact, the magazine at Truxillo, which, under the arrangement made by lieutenant-colonel Waters, was to be the sole source of the supply to both armies, did not contain, on the 20th of August,

a sufficiency to supply one day's demand upon it. But it is said that M. de Calvo promised and engaged to supply the British army; upon which I have only to observe, that I had trusted too long to the promises of Spanish agents, and that I had particular reason for want of confidence in M. de Calvo, as, at the moment he was assuring me that the British army should have all the provision the country could afford, in preference to, and to the exclusion of the Spanish army, I had in my possession an order from him, addressed to the magistrates of Guadaloupe, directing him to send to the head-quarters of the Spanish army provisions which a British commissary had ordered to be prepared, and sent to the magazine at Truxillo, to be divided between both armies, in conformity to the agreement entered into with the Spanish commissaries by lieutenant-colonel Walters.

As the state of the magazine at Truxillo was the immediate cause of my withdrawing from Spain, I beg to observe to your excellency that I was not mistaken in my opinion of its insufficiency; as, if I am not misinformed, general Eguia's army suffered the greatest distress in the neighbourhood of Truxillo, even after that part of the country and the magazine had been relieved from the burthen of supporting the British army.

In respect to the conduct of the operations in Spain by the Spanish general officers, many things were done of which I did not approve; some con-

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trary to my expectations, and some contrary to positive agreement.

M. de Garay has stated that the orders to the marquis de Romana were framed in conformity with suggestions from marshal Beresford; and thence he infers that the operations of that corps were approved by me. The marquis de Romana was still at Corunna on the 5th, and I believe as late as the 9th of August, and the armies of Estremadura retired across the Tagus on the 4th of August. This reference to date shews that there was, and could have been, no connexion in the operations of those different armies. In fact, I knew nothing about the marquis de Romana's; and till I heard on the 3d of August that marshal Ney's corps had passed through the mountains of Estremadura at Banos, and was at Naval Moral, I did not believe that that part of the enemy's army had quitted Astorga, or that the marquis was at liberty, or had it in his power to quit Gallicia.

Marshal Beresford's corps was collected upon the frontiers of Portugal in the end of July, principally for the purpose of forming the troops; and it was hoped that he would keep in check the enemy's corps under Soult, which was at Zamora, and threatened Portugal; that he would act as a corps of observation in that quarter, and on the left of the British army; and I particularly requested marshal Beresford to attend to the Puerto de Perales. But I never intended and never held out

any hope to the Spanish officers that the corps under marshal Beresford could effect any operation at that period of the campaign, and never was a party to any arrangement of an operation in which that corps was to be concerned.

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In the cases in which measures were carried on in a manner of which I did not approve, or which I did not expect, or contrary to positive agreement, those who acted contrary to my opinion may have been right; but still they acted in a manner of which they were aware I did not approve, and the assertion in the note that all operations were carried on with my concurrence is unfounded.

I expected from the communications I had with general Cuesta, through sir Robert Wilson and colonel Roche, that the Puerto de Banos would have been effectually occupied and secured; and at all events that the troops appointed to guard that point, upon which I was aware that all the operations, nay, the security of the army depended, would not have retired without firing a shot.

It was agreed between general Cuesta and me, on the 11th of July, that general Venegas, who was under his command, should march by Tremblique, Ocana, Puerto de Banos, to Arganda, near Madrid, where he was to be on the 22d and 23d of July, when the combined armies should be at Talavera and Escalona. This agreement was not performed, and the consequence of its non-performance (which had been foreseen) occurred; viz. that the com-

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bined armies were engaged with the enemy's concentrated force. I have heard that the cause of the non-performance of this agreement was, that the central junta had countermanded the orders which general Venegas had received from general Cuesta, of which countermand they gave me no notice. I shall make no observation on this proceeding, excepting that the plan of operations, as agreed upon with me, was not carried into execution by general Venegas in this instance. It was agreed by general Cuesta, on the 2d of August, that, when I marched against Soult on the 3d, he would remain at Talavera. That agreement was broken when he withdrew from Talavera, in my opinion, without sufficient cause; and it is also my opinion that he ought not to have withdrawn, particularly considering that he had the charge of my hospital, without my consent. I do not conceive that, if general Cuesta had remained at Talavera, it would have made any difference in the result of the campaign. When Soult added 34,000 men to the numbers already opposed to the combined armies in Estremadura, the enemy were too strong for us, and it was necessary that we should retire across the Tagus. But if general Cuesta had held the post at Talavera, according to agreement, I should have been able to remove my hospital, or at all events to know the exact situation of every individual left there; and I think that other disadvantages might have been avoided in the retreat.

When adverting to this part of the subject, I cannot avoid to observe upon the ambiguity of language used in the note respecting the assistance afforded by general Cuesta to remove the English hospital from Talavera. That assistance amounted to four carts on the 3d of August at Talavera, and two carts on the 4th of August at Oropesa.

In the subsequent removal of the wounded, and of men subsequently taken sick, we had absolutely no assistance from the Spanish army or the country. We were obliged to lay down our ammunition, which was delivered over to the Spanish army, and to unload the treasure, and employ the carts in the removal of the wounded and sick. At Truxillo, in particular, assistance which could have been afforded was withheld, on the 22d and 23d of August, M. de Calvo and don Lozano des Torres being in the town.

In respect to the refusal to make movements recommended by me, I am of opinion, that, if general Bassecourt had been detached towards Placentia on the 30th of July, when I recommended that movement, and if the troops had done their duty, Soult would have been stopped at Tietar, at least for a sufficient length of time to enable me to secure the passage of the Tagus at Almaraz; and here again the hospital would have been saved. He was not detached, however, till the 2d; and then I understand, from M. de Garay's note, that it was

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general Cuesta's opinion that the movement was useless.

It could not have been considered useless by general Cuesta on the 30th, because the proposition for making a detachment from the combined armies originated with himself on that day; and it could not have been considered useless even on the morning of the 2d, as, till the evening of that day, we did not receive the intelligence of the arrival of Soult at Placencia. A reference to the date of the period at which the general considered this detachment as useless would have been desirable.

I cannot account for the surprise stated to have been felt by general Cuesta upon finding the British army at Oropesa on the 4th of August.

The army had left Talavera on the morning of the 3d, and had marched to Oropesa (six leagues, or 24 miles) on that day; which I conceive a sufficient distance for a body of men which had been starving for many days before. The accounts received on the evening of the 3d of the enemy's position at Naval Moral, and of his strength, and of general Cuesta's intended march on that evening, leaving my hospital to its fate, were sufficient to induce me to pause, and consider my situation; and at least not to move before day-light on the 4th, shortly after which time general Cuesta arrived at Oropesa.

Upon considering our situation at that time, it

was evident to me that the combined armies must retire across the Tagus, and that every moment's delay must expose them to the risk of being cut off from their only remaining point of retreat. A battle, even if it had been successful, could not have improved our situation. Two battles, or possibly three, must have been fought and gained, before our difficulties, resulting from the increased strength of the enemy in Estremadura, could be removed. I did not consider the British army at least equal to such an exertion at that moment.

It is unnecessary to make any observation upon the Spanish army; but the occurrences at Arzobispo, a few days afterwards, shewed that they were not equal to any great contest.

M. de Garay complains of the alteration in the line of our operations, and of the sudden changes of the direction of our marches, to which he attributes the deficiency of supplies which in this part of the note he is disposed to admit that the British army experienced. I know of but one alteration in the plan of operations and in the direction of the march, which was occasioned by the circumstances to which I have just referred.

When intelligence was first received of the arrival of the enemy at Placentia, and of the retreat without resistance of the corps appointed to guard the Puerto de Banos, my intention was to move towards Placentia, to attack the enemy's corps which had passed through the Puerto. That in-

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tention was altered only when I heard of the numbers of which that corps consisted; and when I found that by general Cuesta's movement from Talavera the rear of the army was not secure, that the only retreat was liable to be cut off, and that the enemy had it in their power, and at their option, to join, or attack us in separate bodies.

It could not be attributed to me that this large reinforcement was allowed to enter Estremadura, or that we had not earlier intelligence of their approach.

The Puerto de Banos was abandoned without firing a shot by the Spanish troops sent there to guard it; and the junta of Castille, if they knew of the collection of the enemy's troops at Salamanca, sent no notice of it, and no notice was in fact received, till the accounts arrived that the enemy had ordered rations at Fuerte Noble and Los Santos, and they arrived on the following day.

But when the enemy arrived at Naval Moral, in Estremadura, in such strength, and the post of Talavera was abandoned, the central junta will find it difficult to convince their country and the world that it was not expedient to alter the plan of our operations and the direction of our march.

But this alteration, instead of aggravating the deficiency of our supplies, ought to have alleviated our distresses, if any measure had been adopted at Seville to supply the British army, in consequence of my letter of the 16th July. The alteration was

from the offensive to the defensive; the march was retrograde; and, if any supplies had been prepared and sent, the army must have met them on the road.

But they were for the Spanish army; and, although our troops were starving at the time, they were forwarded, untouched, to their destination.

I have sent marshal Beresford a copy of that part of M. de Garay's note which refers to the supplies for the Portuguese army under his command, upon which he will make his observations, which I propose to forward to your excellency. I shall here, therefore, only repeat, that the want of magazines, and the apathy and disinclination of the magistrates and people in Spain to furnish supplies for the armies, even for payment, were the causes that the Portuguese army, as well as the British army, suffered great distress from want, while within the Spanish frontier.

Till the evils, of which I think I have reason to complain, are remedied; till I shall see magazines established for the supply of the armies, and a regular system adopted for keeping them filled, and an army, upon whose exertions I can depend, commanded by officers capable and willing to carry into execution the operations which may have been planned by mutual agreement,—I cannot enter upon any system of co-operation with the Spanish armies.

I do not think it necessary now to enter into any calculations to shew the fallacy of M. de Garay's calculations of the relative numerical strength of the allies, and of the enemy in the Peninsula. If the

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fallacy was not so great as I am certain it is, I should be of the same opinion respecting the expediency of co-operating with the Spanish troops. But if the British and the Portuguese armies should not actively co-operate with them, they will at least do them no injury; and if M. de Garay is not mistaken, as I believe he is, in his calculations of numbers,—and if the Spanish armies are in the state of efficiency in which they are represented to be, to invite our co-operation,—the deficiency of 56,000, which the British and Portuguese armies might add to their numbers, can be no objection to their undertaking immediately the operations which M. de Garay is of opinion would give to his countrymen the early possession of those blessings for which they are contending.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

(Signed)

WELLINGTON.

The following is the consequence of this note, addressed to the superior authority:—

Cadiz, Nov. 8, 1809.

Sir,

Marquis Wel-
lesley to don
Francisco de
Sauvedra.

The note from M. de Garay, under date the 3d October, containing his excellency's reply to my note of the 8th September, has been communicated to lord viscount Wellington, of whose observations I have the honour to enclose a copy.

From the remarks of the commander-in-chief of the British army it will appear that the exertions

of the Spanish government, described by M. de Garay, however active and sincere, have been entirely fruitless.

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Whatever orders may have been issued at Seville for the supply of provisions to the British army, for the security of its means of transport, or for the co-operation of the Spanish general and armies, the fact is, that the British troops neither received adequate means of subsistence nor of movement, nor sufficient aid of any description, in the course of the last campaign.

Marquis Wellesley to don Francisco de Saavedra.

The detailed statements contained in the enclosed letter from lord Wellington leave no doubt of this fact. It is for Spain to judge whether the cause of this calamity is to be found in her government, in its officers, or in the state of the country.

It is neither my duty nor my inclination to exhibit criminal charges against any civil or military officers in the service of Spain. If the facts stated by the British commander-in-chief should appear to demand inquiry into the conduct of any individual, it is to be supposed that the government of Spain will institute the necessary process, without the British ambassador to undertake the invidious office of criminal accusation.

It is sufficient for me to have ascertained the existence of the evils, which I have repeatedly submitted to the consideration of the Spanish government; and when the active operation of the British army in Spain is again solicited by the Spanish go-

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Francisco de
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vernment, I am compelled to require the correction of those evils before I can consent to recommend any such operation to the British commander-in-chief.

M. de Garay has attempted to insinuate that the British commander-in-chief was actuated, in his retirement towards the frontier of Portugal, by some motives different from those which had been publicly declared.

M. de Garay charges me with a deliberate determination to urge the retreat of the British army from Spain. These insinuations are entirely void of foundation. M. de Garay also states that the British army has abandoned Spain. This assertion is grossly and manifestly erroneous. Your excellency is sufficiently informed of the anxious solicitude, manifested by lord Wellington and myself, to maintain such a position in Spain, as might effectually protect the southern provinces, and the city of Seville; and your excellency knows that the British army for upwards of two months has actually occupied a position upon the river Guadiana, nearly the same as that earnestly recommended by M. de Garay himself.

It is unnecessary to remind your excellency, that, ever since the 31st August, the British army has been stationed from Badajos to Merida; and, occupying that station, has accomplished the defensive purpose originally intended. It will remain for M. de Garay to explain by what argument he

can now justify the assertion, that the British army has abandoned Spain.

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1809.
November.

Marquis Wel-
lesley to don
Francisco de
Saavedra.

The discussion which has lately arisen respecting the difficulty of furnishing provisions for the British army at Badajos has sufficiently proved the anxiety of the commander-in-chief to make every reasonable sacrifice to the security of Spain: on the other hand, your excellency must recollect the recent attempts which have been made at Badajos to compel our army to retire from that position.

If the distress of our army, and the want of provisions, or the necessity of defending Portugal, had compelled lord Wellington to retire within the Portuguese frontier, I trust that the justice and liberality of the Spanish character would still have vindicated the British commander-in-chief from the imputations which are insinuated in M. de Garay's note.

At the conclusion of M. de Garay's note, his excellency is pleased to advert to the suggestions which I had intimated of the advantage that might be derived from an early effort to improve the administration of military affairs in Spain, by concentrating the strength of the executive power, and by connecting its activity and vigour with the public spirit of the people, and with the collective wisdom of the nation.

In this intimation it was not my intention to suggest any course of proceeding essentially different from that which the government had already

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1809.

November.

Marquis Wel-
lesley to don
Francisco de
Saavedra.

announced to Spain as absolutely necessary to her complete deliverance from the enemy, and to her permanent happiness and glory.

An executive power, wisely constituted, and deriving its authority and strength not only from its more compact form, but from the support of the people and from the good will of the nation, would afford the most powerful security for the independence of the monarchy, and for the general union and tranquillity of Spain.

My duty towards my just and virtuous sovereign, as well as towards the government to which I am accredited, required that I should discountenance any project (which might come to my knowledge) of effecting alterations in the existing public authorities of Spain, by violent or irregular means.

For a mere act of duty I claim no acknowledgment from the Spanish government; but, on the other hand, I trust that, from my endeavour to avert the dreadful consequences of conspiracy and tumult, no inference will be drawn to prevent or to delay the correction of those evils which menace the welfare and honour of Spain, and the efficacy and stability of her alliance with Great Britain.

With the highest respect, &c. &c. &c.

(Signed)

WELLESLEY.

While these diplomatic matters were arranging, the British general was not idle even in complimenting, as far as they deserved, the allies.

*Badajos, Oct. 31, 1809.—Received
Nov. 27, 1809.*

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CHAP. V.

1809.
October.

My Lord,

The Spanish corps under the duque del Parque was attacked on the 13th instant by a considerable part of the French corps (lately Ney's) commanded by general le Marchand, in a position which the duque had taken up at Jamames, near Ciudad Rodrigo. The French corps consisted of 10,000 infantry and 1,200 cavalry; and, after a very vigorous attack, they were repulsed with considerable loss, and retired upon Salamanca, leaving one piece of cannon in the hands of the Spaniards. The loss of the Spanish troops was about 200 killed and 400 wounded; that of the enemy much more considerable.

The Spanish infantry are stated to have conducted themselves well in this action; but the cavalry otherwise; and indeed they had lost in its commencement the Spanish flying artillery, which was afterwards regained by the infantry. The post at Jamames is noted throughout the country for its strength; and I understand that it was well occupied by the Spanish troops; and that throughout this action the duque del Parque distinguished himself. He was joined on the following day by the corps of Ballasteros; and he moved forward on the 25th, and took possession of Salamanca, which

Lord Wellington to lord Castlereagh.

BOOK V.
CHAP. V.

the enemy abandoned, retiring upon Toro and Zamora.

1809.
October.

Lord Wellington to lord Castlereagh.

The corps of general Eguia, which is now under the temporary command of general Arezegas (who has lately come from Catalonia), has retired to La Carolina; and the French are in possession of the whole country to the foot of the mountain. But they have made no attempt to force the passes.

All has continued quiet in this quarter, and I have not heard that the enemy's corps at Oropesa and Talavera have made any movement to their right in consequence of the failure of general Marchand's attack upon the duque del Parque.

I have the honour to be, &c.

WELLINGTON.

Badajos, Nov. 16, 1809. Received Dec. 4, 1809.

My Lord,

Lord Wellington to the earl of Liverpool.

The corps which had been defeated by the duque del Parque at Jamames having been joined by the corps under the command of general Kellerman, which had been for a considerable time at Valladolid, and other reinforcements having been sent from New Castille and Estremadura through the Puerto de Pica, the duque del Parque retired from Salamanca in the beginning of this month, and on the 8th his head-quarters were at Bejar, at the entrance of the Puerto de Banos, which pass was occupied by the troops under his command.

The enemy's troops in Old Castille, supposed to amount to 36,000 men, are under the command of marshal Mortier.

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1809.
November.

Lord Wellington to the earl of Liverpool.

Since I wrote to lord Castlereagh on the 31st of October, the Spanish army under general Areyzaga, which was at that time at La Carolina, has moved forward into La Mancha; and on the 10th instant, the date of the last accounts which I have received of their operations, their head-quarters were at Dos Banos, not far from Ocana, at which place there was a French corps under Sebastiani, and there was another French corps under marshal Victor at Geveres, between Toledo and Consuegra. The Spanish army under general Areyzaga will probably have fought a general action before this time. The Spanish troops still remaining in Estremadura have been placed under the command of the duque d'Albuquerque.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) WELLINGTON.

To the Earl of Liverpool, &c. &c.

It would be ridiculous to enter here into the comparative merits or circumstances of the allies at this particular period.

December,
1809.

It is however due to his majesty's government to state the proofs of the facts before related in respect to the origin and formation of that Anglo-Portuguese army, which has since so eminently distinguished itself in the common cause.

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CHAP. V.

1809.
December.

Having, as before stated*, authorized Mr. Villiers, the British minister, to engage for the payment of 10,000 Portuguese troops, and again for an additional 10,000, the secretary of state received the following detailed and highly satisfactory return :—

Dec. 16, 1809.

Right hon.
J. C. Villiers
to the earl
Bathurst.

Enclosed (says Mr. Villiers) is the list of the regiments separately paid and maintained by Great Britain; they are taken from the charge of this country. Their accounts are kept separate under British inspection, and in no respect does the aid of Great Britain go to any other regiment, to any other part of the army, the militia, or the defences of the country. I insisted upon this agreement when I first came.

Enclosed is likewise the estimate of the expense of these regiments, independent of arms and clothing, or of the general and staff officers which may be supposed to belong to such an army.

It was necessary, for the sake of keeping these accounts separate, rather to take a number of distinct regiments, which would perhaps be under the number of men allowed to be paid for, though, by possibility, if complete, they might a little exceed it; and I must do justice to the Portuguese government, and to the paymaster-general, in saying that they adopted and liked this plan, though at some loss to this country, as being the only simple

* B. 4, c. 5, 283.

and practicable way of carrying into effect the principles which were laid down.

Accordingly not a shilling has been ever advanced for any man which was not in existence as a soldier.

BOOK V.
CHAP. V.

1809.
December.

Right hon.
J. C. Villiers
to the earl
Bathurst.

Abstracts from the monthly returns of the 12 regiments of Portuguese infantry and 3 battalions of chasseurs, paid by Great Britain, shewing their effective strength on the 30th day of September, 1809.

Regts. No. 1	Lippe	1,414 men.
2	Lagos	1,261
3	Olivenca, 1st.....	627
4	Freire	1,332
7	Setuval	1,297
10	Lisboa.....	1,375
11	Panamacor	1,400
13	Peniche	1,230
14	Tavera	1,208
15	Olivenca, 2d	583
16	Vieyra Ielles	1,378
19	Cascaes	1,209

Effective strength of 12 regts. 14,314 men.

Three Battalions of Chasseurs.

Battalion No. 1	..	623
3	..	589
4	..	544

1,756 men.

Total 16,070 men.

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CHAP. V.

1809.

December.

Right hon.
J. C. Villiers
to the earl
Bathurst.

Note.—By the alvards of the 18th of October, 1808, a regiment of infantry should consist of 1,550 men, at which strength the 12 regiments when complete are 18,600 men
And the three battalions chasseurs at
628 each 1,884

Total 20,484 men

The effective Portuguese troops paid by Great Britain, on the 30th September last, being, as above, 16,050 men.

It falls short of 20,000 men by 3,950

20,000

(Signed) JOHN BELL,
Deputy Superintendant of British Aids.

MEMORANDUM.

Lisbon, Dec. 16, 1809.

Mr. Bell informs me, that, by a reference to Joaquim de Costa E. Silva's estimate for 20,000 men in August, 1809, the expense is stated at £640,300 per annum, or the monthly expenses, within a fraction, £53,358.

(Signed) J. C. VILLIERS.

These circumstances led to the determination of the British government, which finally received the sanction of parliament, to complete the noble effort which had thus grown in favour of Portugal, the annunciation of which is contained in the following despatch.

Jan. 5, 1809.

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CHAP. V.

1810.

January.

Marquis Wel-
lesley to the
right hon.
J. C. Villiers.

It is his majesty's intention to furnish in
aid of Portugal the annual sum of £980,000 ; namely,

£600,000 for 20,000 troops already in the British pay.

250,000 for 10,000 additional troops.

130,000 for increased pay of Portuguese officers.

£980,000

This great and generous effort cannot fail to confirm in the Portuguese government and nation the just sentiments due to the British alliance, and to inspire additional zeal and confidence in the maintenance of the security and independence of the kingdom of Portugal. The sum granted by his majesty for increasing the pay of the officers of the Portuguese army must be considered as the strongest testimony of a liberal regard for the interests and honour of his majesty's ancient ally.

The policy of this measure has been repeatedly urged in your despatches, and I trust that his majesty's government will derive from its adoption those advantages which you have anticipated, and which it may justly be expected to produce. In return for the liberal supplies, his majesty is entitled to claim from the Portuguese government every assistance which can be afforded to the British commander and troops, a faithful and judicious application of the funds granted for the support of so large a portion of the Portuguese army, and every effort for the due maintenance of that part of the Portu-

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1810.

January.

Marquis Wel-
lesley to the
right hon.
J. C. Villiers.

guese force which must be supplied from the exclusive resources of Portugal.

In addition to these arrangements, his majesty will expect to receive regular monthly accounts of the expenditure of the sums applicable to the military charges of Portugal, under the orders issued to lord Wellington, as well as accurate returns of the state and condition of the several corps receiving British pay; and you will be pleased to direct your particular attention to these objects.

It is also desirable that his majesty should be acquainted with the state and condition of that part of the Portuguese forces which is to be maintained from the revenues of Portugal. You will therefore transmit to me such information as you may be enabled to obtain on this point, as well as upon the general situation of the finances and resources of Portugal, and particularly of the funds applicable to the expenses of the army.

The present division cannot be better closed than with the following returns:—

No. 1.—Return of the casualties which have take place in the British army serving in Spain and Portugal, between the 31st March, 1809, and 24th December, 1809; exclusive of the casualties that took place among the artillery and engineers.

Adjutant-General's Office, March 12, 1810.

Died	4,931
Discharged	41
Deserted	349

Total.....5,321

HARRY CALVERT, A. G.

No. 2.—Return of the sick of the army under the command of Lord Viscount Wellington, employed in Spain and Portugal, on the 25th November, 1809.

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CHAP. V.

1809.

Adjutant-General's Office, March 12, 1810.

8,880 rank and file, exclusive of the sick of the artillery and engineers.

HARRY CALVERT, A. G.

No. 3.—Return of the sick of the army employed in Spain and Portugal, under the command of lord viscount Wellington, on the 25th December, 1809.

Adjutant-General's Office, March 12, 1810.

8,782 rank and file, exclusive of the sick of artillery and engineers.

HARRY CALVERT, A. G.

No. 4.—Return of the sick of the army employed in Spain and Portugal, under the command of lieutenant-general lord viscount Wellington, on the 8th Feb., 1810.

Adjutant-General's Office, March 12, 1810.

7,604 rank and file, exclusive of the sick of artillery and engineers.

N.B.—By a report from lieutenant-general lord viscount Wellington, it appears that, on the 21st February, 900 convalescents, included in the above number, had joined the army, and that 1,800 more convalescents were on the way from Elvas.

HARRY CALVERT, A. G.

CHAP. VI.

MARCH ON PORTUGAL, AND CLOSE OF THE
CAMPAIGN.

Position of the Allies and the Enemy on the March of the British Army on Portugal.—Position taken up by the British Army.—Battle of Ocana, and temporary Cessation of Operations.—Sudden Demonstrations of the French.—New Misfortunes of the Allies.—General Prospect of the Future.

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1809.

HAVING, for the sake of continuity, passed to the last period of the papers presented to parliament at this peculiar period of the war, attention must now be directed to the circumstances of the allied army and the enemy, as far as their relations were applicable to the British troops.

The extreme awkwardness of the predicament in which the British and the allies were placed at the close of the correspondence renders it necessary to exhibit a few documents, to shew the state of sentiment on the part of the latter in those ope-

rations which did not relate to the British army, previously to stating the position of the armies.

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1809.

That, whatever the awkwardness of those circumstances, it did not arise from any abatement of the preponderance of public opinion (that great ægis of nations) against the common enemy, is evident from a variety of facts; and particularly that the French in the south and west of Spain had found their condition so unsafe as to take the strongest measures against the clergy and inhabitants, who had generally manifested their attachment to the patriotic cause. The Spaniards, moreover, took every care to announce to their countrymen the flagrance of these enormities, and to hold up the conduct of those who suffered with courage and dignity as examples.

It was thus that the Seville Gazette, in July, held up the conduct of the following worthy members of the community:—

The victims who were sacrificed here, on the 3d of June last, were Dr. Pon, Father Gayeta, Juan Massana, N. Aulet, and a serjeant from Soria. The first was a doctor of civil and canon law, of the university of Cervera, and rector of the fortress. Being asked by the judge whether he had distributed 50 muskets, he answered, Yes; and that he should do it again, had he an opportunity. Being asked for what purpose he had done it, he an-

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1809.

swered, To defend his king, religion, and country.

It being retorted upon him that he was doing the contrary, since his religion forbade the shedding of blood, his king did not desire it, and his country abhorred it; he replied, That they neither professed nor understood the Roman-catholic apostolic religion, nor acknowledged Ferdinand VII. as their king; that they had, therefore, another country, and it was no wonder that they should speak as they did. Being asked to whom he distributed those muskets, he said, To good and faithful Spaniards, that he would not betray their names. He suffered the *garrote**.

The second was a priest, the superior of St. Cayetano. He died the last, having administered the last consolations of religion to the others, and suffered the garrote with the utmost serenity.

The third was a merchant's clerk, belonging to the house of Llordella. He was convicted of offering to purchase stores belonging to the commandant. Being reproached by the French general with being a traitor, he replied, "It is your excellency who is the traitor; who, under the mask of friendship, seized our fortresses. I have but tried to regain what you wickedly robbed us of." He was *hanged*.

* A sort of swift and certain strangling to death, by means of a screw. How fertile is the mind of man even in the means of coldly destroying his fellow-creatures!

This punishment was in course to mark by degradation, even in death, so *abominable* an *insinuation*.

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The fourth was also a young man, of whom, as well as of the serjeant, the particulars are not ascertained; but all accounts agree that they were both hanged, having merited the appellation of martyrs of their country, and perhaps of their religion.

Innumerable were the instances of a similar description.

Nor was this confined to the civil classes. The duke del Parque, as captain-general of Old Castile, finding that, on the advance of some detachments from Ciudad Rodrigo towards Salamanca, the people were so rejoiced as to venture, during the evident despondency of the French divisions there, to shout *Viva Fernando Septimo!* and were in consequence subjected to punishment, published the following letter, which he had addressed to the French general:—

THE DUKE DEL PARQUE, GENERAL IN CHIEF
OF THE ARMY OF CASTILE, TO THE GENERAL
COMMANDING THE TROOPS IN SALAMANCA.

General,

“ I have learned that some detachments of my cavalry have arrived at the gates of your city, attacking your advanced posts, and that they have spread disorder and confusion among

your followers; that the renegade Spaniards thought their last hour was come, which probably is not far distant; and that their malice availed itself of this opportunity to gratify private revenge; accusing their fellow-citizens of having affixed writings written by themselves, to furnish a pretence for their iniquities; and, who in consequence, have been thrown into prison, and loaded with irons.

“ I cannot behold with indifference that the worthy inhabitants of Salamanca should suffer innocently, in consequence of the movements of my troops. I therefore give you notice, general, that I shall execute reprisals, inflicting the same punishment upon an equal number of French prisoners, which you may cause the people of Salamanca to suffer.

“ I have also been informed that you do not consider as soldiers the officers and scouts of my army, because they do not wear an uniform, styling them robbers and insurgents, and treating such as fall into your hands as malefactors. Know, general, that they are soldiers, and deserve to be considered as such. They know the laws of war, and observe them better than your men do. One of your generals, and his two adjutants, who were those of Joseph Napoleon, fell into the hands of these partisans, were well treated, and sent to this fortress in safety and with decency. Such has not been the lot of the Spanish generals who have had the misfortune to become your prisoners. Compare the

difference there is between the humanity of the Spaniards, whom you call insurgents, because they defend their country and hearths against the most horrible and tyrannical invasion, with your inhumanity, who burn, ravage, and destroy, like Vandals, whatever you reach, profaning temples, massacreing women and children, violating women, and committing atrocities unknown to the Goths, Vandals, and even the Moors, when they made their irruptions into Spain. What has your boasted philosophy wrought? Where have the ancient French people hidden themselves, who were once so famed for the gentleness of their manners, and their amiable and enlightened character, and who knew for ages to carry on war, and preserve the characteristic honour of true warriors? No, you do not belong to that noble and distinguished race; or, if you have a connexion with them, it is only as their spurious descendants. As such you have comported yourselves, and as such I shall treat you if you misuse my brave men, and commit in Old Castile the crimes and horrors you have exhibited in Galicia and Asturias.

(Signed)

“THE DUKE DEL PARQUE CASTRILLO.”

Head-Quarters at Ciudad Rodrigo, July 18.

And while these demonstrations of the unshaken abhorrence of Spain, speaking of its general principle, to the usurpation of France, were made, there

were not wanting others in a demi-official form to convince the friends of Spanish emancipation that what seemed to them, and could not but so seem, a coldness in the transactions of the temporary government, arose out of the very nature of things, and were chargeable rather to the immoveable and paralyzed system, which was in a state of subversion, than to the persons against whom complaint was necessarily directed.

Such, among others, was the letter from Cadiz of this period, extracted in the journals, from a pen by no means unknown to the British public, and which, in its deductions at least, is so entirely of a politico-military nature, that it would be unpardonable to refuse admission to a comparatively small extract from it here.

The writer, contemplating the remarks which at this time were so current in the British parliament on the war in the Peninsula, and also the effect upon public opinion of those remarks; an effect, indeed, which was nothing less than to urge violently an assembly of representatives of the Spanish people at any rate; shews, what to our purpose at least is sufficient, that it would not tend to the increased efficiency of the Spanish armies, or the better condition of our own.

So much has been premised on this subject in the first volume of this attempt towards a history of these campaigns, that nothing further is necessary than to give the writer's words:—

“ That the supreme junta appears to you guilty of negligence, in delaying the meeting of the cortes, I am not surprised, because you are at a distance from the scene, and judge of matters more from the facility with which your legislature is assembled, than from a thorough knowledge of our situation. You have not an enemy in the heart of the country. In England, the respective rights and privileges of the different orders, towns and boroughs, the forms of election, the modes of proceeding, are all ascertained and fixed by the laws of the land; the machine is finished, its movements regulated. Here all must be begun *de novo*: a new constitution, new laws, and a new order of things altogether, must be established; old abuses must be eradicated, old privileges annulled, old pretensions set aside; and I would say, old opinions, sanctioned by time and fostered by long habits, must be made to give way to more enlarged ideas and more patriotic views.

“ Now, reflect on the education, the prejudices, the information, of the generality of those men who are to form the cortes. Will you find in them those political attainments, that absence of jarring interests, those enlightened minds, necessary to frame a wise constitution, and to legislate for a great nation? It is doubtful whether, at any period, such a multitude of delegates will be desirable: but while the enemy has a hold in the country—while its independence remains contested—there can be no doubt

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of the inevitable consequence of their assembling. The energies of the public mind would be wasted in dissension, and internal divisions would render Spain an easy prey to the intrigues, the artifice, and the insatiable ambition of a watchful tyrant. While an invading foe threatens the existence of any country, the spirit of party generally becomes extinct or suspended; common fears produce united resistance. It would, therefore, be the extreme of indiscretion, not to say consummate folly, to draw off men's minds from an urgent and momentous object, which requires the joint exertion of every rank and description, to interests of comparatively inferior magnitude, which never can be adjusted without much discussion and high party feelings. Let us beat the enemy first; then we will heal our wounds. I am not convinced that the mass of the Spanish nation are yet sufficiently enlightened to understand the superiority of freedom over habits of quiet subjection, or the blessings of pure religion over ritual observances, and what you call superstitious ceremonies. The generality of men continue long wedded to early impressions; the wisest of them may think that a religion devoid of external pomp is not adapted to the character of the lower orders, who are more influenced by objects which strike the senses, than by the pure combinations of reason. Be that as it may, you think the junta should have accelerated the meeting of the cortes, for no other reason than to do what the usurper has

professed to do—to reform the religious orders, and new-model the whole church establishment. I answer you, that the cause of liberty in Spain will owe more to the religious than to any other description of men; their influence has been widely beneficial; and were the cortes actually assembled, it would be ungracious and unwise to anticipate the measure of religious reform, which we know the church itself intends, in the same spirit that now guides the arms, opens the purses, and animates the zeal of all the religious of the country in the common cause of liberty, independence, and national happiness.

“ You reflect on the inequality of talents and the inactivity of the junta. There may be—there must be—a difference of talents among thirty-two men; but there is no difference of views, no want of integrity; nor can I perceive a lack of talents or activity in men, who, when they assembled, had neither troops, arms, nor money,—who have excited a spirit of universal resistance to the usurper, and maintained tranquillity, that is, have saved the people from those scenes of bloodshed, sacrilege, and atrocity, which have ushered in revolutions in other countries,—who have supported a war of sixteen months, neither discouraged by the occasional triumphs of the invader, nor seduced by intrigue applied in all forms. At every overture from the enemy, and at every defeat, death or independence was their solemn oath: *Liberty to our Prince and*

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Country was the answer; *Fidelity to our Ally* was the exclamation of all and every member. We hope soon to see the tyrant humbled to the dust, and the Peninsula purged of Gallic violence and Gallic influence. The assembling of the cortes will soon follow.

“ The committee of five even now is in constant activity, with the enlightened Jovellanos at their head; and, whatever may be my private ideas on the expediency of the measure, I know that the junta conceive themselves bound to execute the declared intention of Ferdinand, in calling together, with all possible speed, the members of the cortes, for the purpose of a total renovation of the kingdom. But the evident difficulty and danger of the measure, until the nation can sit down to discussion free from fears of external oppression, must strike the junta, and every thinking man.

“ You censure with too much severity the refusal of our *alcaldes* to accommodate the troops in their churches; you make no allowance for the reverential awe with which the Spaniards and all catholics venerate their churches. The Jewish history, or that of profane nations, might have opened your mind on that subject. The catholic considers his church as the house of God, the tabernacle as a *sanctum sanctorum*; the sacrament is always kept in it, ready for administration to the dying. To require of Spaniards that a place so sacred should be a receptacle of military profaneness

and riot would be, in their eyes, to require a surrender of their religion, and an act of public apostasy. Remember the bigotry of Englishmen, at certain periods of your history,—reflect also on the conduct of the British troops in South America,—and you will make some allowance for an injured as well as an enlightened people.

“ I allow that the troops have behaved, on some occasions, in a dastardly manner; but, sir, a panic may seize the hearts of veterans. A bad omen has often dismayed the conquerors of the world; and as to officers themselves, which of them is a hero, ‘ in the eyes of his valet-de-chambre?’ Is it then surprising that peasants who never smelt powder, and who scarcely understood the use of a musket, should shrink at the thunders of veteran battalions? But it were well for Europe that other nations had given such proofs of undaunted courage, of invincible heroism, as the Spanish people. If success be the test of merit, what nation deserves applause in the present contest? The imperishable glory of Saragossa and Gerona will live in the memory of mankind, and stimulate future generations in Spain to deeds of patriotism and lasting fame.”

In furtherance of this idea, without exact regard to time, the following communication is inserted of an affair which has claims to the title of a battle, from the report of an intelligent English officer employed under the most peculiar circumstances on the spot.

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1800.

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Affair of
St. Payo.

- Addressing his patron, says the officer:—

“ I have the pleasure to inform you that the division of the Minho, the left of the marquis of Romana’s army, under the command of count Noronia, has obtained a decisive victory over the enemy on the 8th inst., at the bridge of St. Payo.

“ The division of the Minho, under the command of general Carrera, having defeated the enemy on the 23d ult. at St. Jago, obliging them to retreat precipitately to Corunna, taking from them 40 arobas of church-plate, and a great quantity of other plunder, proceeded to Ponte Vedra, for the purpose of arming the peasant soldiers, and was returning in pursuit of the enemy. On his arrival at Padron, his advanced guard met that of the enemy, who, having received reinforcements at Corunna, was advancing towards Ponte Vedra.

“ The great want of arms and stores under which the Spanish army laboured, and the very heavy rains which had for some days fallen, by which about 40,000 cartridges were destroyed, from the peasants being without cartridge-boxes, induced the count of Noronia (who had just joined general Carrera) to fall back towards Vigo, for the two-fold object of receiving the supplies he so much wanted, and securing a position where he might oppose the enemy with advantage.

“ Upon the 6th inst. the Spanish army passed the river at St. Payo, in launches, the bridge having

been previously destroyed, and occupied a strong military position on the left bank. The passage was not impeded by the enemy, who might, from the very superior number of their cavalry, and then of artillery, also have cut off, at least, their rear guard.

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“ On the morning of the 7th, the enemy, in force 8000, including 600 cavalry and six pieces of artillery, headed by marshal Ney and général Loison, commenced a vigorous attack, and seemed determined to force the passage of the river: the patriots evinced equal determination to resist. After an incessant fire of cannon and musquetry on both sides for ten hours, the enemy ceased at seven in the morning.

“ At day-light, in the morning of the 8th, the enemy renewed his attack, and seemed determined at all risks to cross the river; but those who had passed the bridge of Lodi could not pass the bridge of St. Payo; those who had rapidly crossed the Adda and the Po were not only checked, but obliged precipitately to retreat before the brave patriots on the banks of the Soto Mayor. The enemy again opened a heavy fire of shot and shells on the morning of the 8th, with the object of concealing another meditated attack against the bridge of Caldenos, a league and a half higher up the river. —This position, as well as every other where the river was fordable, had been previously occupied by the vigilance of the Spanish generals.

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“ After a fire of five hours, the enemy, being unable to gain a foot of ground, relinquished the attempt of forcing the bridge of Caldelas, defended by an inferior force.

“ On the evening of the 8th, the enemy proceeded to reconnoitre and sound the river close to the sea-shore,—an attempt they were soon obliged to abandon, from the well-directed fire of the regiment of Murrago, which particularly distinguished itself on this and several other occasions.

“ The night of the 8th, the enemy devoted himself to his accustomed occupation previous to a retreat, burning houses, destroying provisions, and killing the defenceless. The flight of the peasantry, however, on the enemy's approach, prevented the perpetration of cruelties to the extent to which this barbarous army has had an opportunity, in other parts, of gratifying their inhuman disposition.

“ The few, however, who were unable to escape, became victims of their cruelty. One instance is worthy of remark: an infirm old woman, unable to join her family in their flight, was inhumanly butchered in bed.

“ At one o'clock in the morning of the 9th the enemy commenced a precipitate retreat, leaving 39 unburied dead close to the bridge, 40 muskets, a great quantity of clothes, and other plundered articles, and some provisions. Their retreat was towards St. Jago. The Spanish army consisted of 13,000, including 150 cavalry; 4000, however, of

the peasants, were without muskets. The number of cannon was equal on both sides; each had six pieces: the enemy, however, had on their side a six-inch howitzer, of which description of ordnance the Spaniards were destitute. The loss of the Spaniards in killed and wounded amounts to 111; that of the enemy, from what came under our observation, and from the information we have already received, must have been considerably above 300. The number of carts that passed to Ponte Vedra with their wounded, the bones and remains of several bodies which they had burnt, and those discovered buried and hid away, combine to prove this number rather under-rated.

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“ Four gun-boats were fitted out, with the greatest promptness, by the orders of the Spanish commodore. This force contributed most materially to the repulse of the enemy, having kept up a heavy and well-directed fire upon the enemy’s flank, wherever the tide permitted their approach to the beach. One two-gun battery was completely razed, and the guns dismounted by the well-directed fire of one of the gun-boats.

“ Nothing can exceed the confidence the patriots seem to repose in their generals. Carrera, who has thrice led them to victory, appears to possess the unbounded admiration and confidence of his troops.

“ If the enemy had succeeded in forcing the passage of the Soto Mayor, his object was to attack

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the castle of Castro, now committed to the custody of colonel Carrol. *The garrison consisted of a detachment of British soldiers, stragglers from sir John Moore's army, collected in Asturias by colonel Carrol, and some marines under captain Crawford."*

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the British
Army on Por-
tugal.

With these premises, we now arrive in detail at the important crisis of the movement of the British army towards the Portuguese frontier.

On the 9th of October the guards broke up their hut encampment, and marched to Talavera la Real; as did general Campbell's brigade to Lobon.

They were next day quartered in Badajos (the capital of Estremadura); the officers on the inhabitants, the men in convents.

While it may appear that the Spanish feelings, though irreconcilable, have been somewhat defended in the preceding paragraphs, any thing which tended to their conciliation ought not to be forgotten; still less, of course, the pleasing efforts of the commander-in-chief.

It thus appears that, on the 7th of October, he gave a ball on occasion of lieut.-general Sherbrooke being invested with the order of the Bath. A splendid retinue was assembled from all the principal inhabitants, and softer victories succeeded to that of Talavera. The birth-day of Ferdinand VII. (Oct. 14) was duly observed, a royal salute fired from the ramparts, &c.

The positions of the various armies were now as follow :—

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Of the enemy, Victor's division was between La Mancha and Talavera de la Reyna. Of the generals, Sebastiani at La Mancha; Mortier at Oropesa, Arzobispo, and Naval Moral; Ney at Salamanca, with 14,000 men. By the 1st September Soult was at Placentia, Zarza Major, and Coria, with 8000 men; Victor at Oropesa with 4000; Mortier at Talavera, with 10,000; and Sebastiani moving to the south.

The duke del Parque (who succeeded the marquis Romana on his departure for the supreme junta as a member) at Ciudad Rodrigo; the duke of Albuquerque in front, with 10,000 men; general Eguia about to join Vanegas in la Mancha, with 20,000 men, the remains of Cuesta's army.

Early in November, general Ariezaga, with whom were colonel Roche and lord Macduff, was at Damiel. Lieutenant-general don Luis Bassecourt, with his troops, occupied a line between Merida and the Tagus.

On the 13th of September, lord Blantyre, with the 2d battalion of the 42d regiment, joined general Cameron's brigade at Talavera de Real, &c.; and on the 14th general Catlin Crawford's brigade, comprising 28th, 2d battalion, hon. lieutenant-colonel Abercromby; 34th, lieutenant-colonel Maister; and 39th, lieutenant-colonel Wilson; proceeded

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to join lieutenant-general Hill's division at Montijo, Puebla, Nova, and Torremajor.

Lieutenant-general sir Stapleton Cotton was at Merida with the principal cavalry; the light infantry, under brigadier-general Robert Crawford, at Campo Major; major-general Cole at Olivenza.

The army was reinforced by a troop of horse artillery, that under captain Ross having lost many horses when the army retired from Talavera; and the finer brigade of light infantry under general Crawford. The spirit of the troops was never higher, notwithstanding the evils they had encountered in the ordinary effects of the close of autumn and a campaign, both of which were on this occasion severer than usual, from the malignance of a fever which prevailed on the frontiers of Spain and Portugal.

The battle of Ocana, however, soon occasioned a change of position in the British army.

Don Juan de Areyzaga, appointed to a Spanish army in all its circumstances respectable, by a misjudged confidence descended from the mountains to encounter the enemy in the plain, was beaten and dispersed. To enter into its details would answer no purpose here; it is sufficient that to it is principally ascribed the movement of the British army from the borders of Estremadura, which took place on the 8th of December.

At eight in the morning of that day the guards

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marched from Badajos with captain Lawson's brigade of heavy six-pounders, and on the following the king's German legion, with general Cameron's brigade; and early in January the whole of the British army had taken up a new position, and was settled in winter quarters.

The commander of the forces, after a visit to Lisbon, to inspect and direct the chain of works constructing there for its defence in the last resort, established himself at Vigru. The main body of the infantry was cantoned in the several towns and villages on the road to the frontier, the 2d division and major-general Slade's brigade of cavalry excepted, which, under the command of lieutenant-general Hill, continued in the line of the Tagus.

Brigadier-general Robert Crawford commanded the out-works on the banks of the Coa, with the light brigade and 1st German hussars. Next in advance was the 3d division, and major-general Picton supported by the 4th. Major-general Cole's was at Guarda Celerico, and the villages in the valley of the Mondego. The brigade of heavy cavalry under general Fane was cantoned in Coimbra, and the 16th light dragoons at S. Cambadao.

In the conflicts of the British general with the junta, and with the commanders who still retained to a certain degree its confidence, it has been impossible to take that view of the misfortunes of the allies in their rapid succession, which their importance demanded.

They, however, seem to have been faults of the general rather than the troops, though the latter did not fail to give full effect to the result of this incapacity. The rash ignorance of Areyzaga, who commanded in chief, certainly set at nought even the talents of the generals who served under him, among whom there were several who had seen service and obtained considerable credit; and indeed himself had acquired greatly the reputation of personal courage. This alone, however, forms not the general.

With his army served the baron de Crossard, a German nobleman of great experience, who had distinguished himself in the service of Austria, and was employed in a confidential mission from that court, similarly to those British officers who were sent from England on this particular service, upon the simultaneous rising of Spain. To him the Spanish general looked for advice, and from him he received it with a generous frankness that merits the highest praise, and deserved to have been of more utility to the good cause.

By this nobleman, and by the well-informed lord Macduff, who was also (on the part of this country) with this Spanish army, was laid a plan of operations that promised to produce the best possible result.

The army of La Mancha was to pass rapidly through to the open country, carry off the detached corps of the enemy, and place itself upon the eastern Tagus, with one division passed over. The

rest of the army was to entrench in the mountains. If the position should be found not tenable, it was not to come to battle, but manœuvre so as to gain the mountains of the Guadarama. The duke of Parque was to manœuvre upon the Escorial, and alarm the French on that side of Madrid; while the duke of Albuquerque was to move in the direction of Talavera. The British were requested to favour these movements, which, as far as possible, would have been done; though, from the circumstances that have been related, it was not much in a condition to have done so. Thus, by the mere effect of manœuvre, the enemy would have been obliged to retire, until his reinforcements arrived, behind the Ebro, without being able to fight a battle. The first part of the plan was well executed; but, owing to the imprudence and folly of Areyzaga, all was lost.

Lieutenant-general Areyzaga was appointed late in October to the command of the army of La Mancha, which had been for some time stationed in and about La Carolina, behind the pass of the Opincopeno, and in the mountains of the Sierra Morena. On the 3d of November, the army, consisting of 6,600 defective cavalry, 43,000 effective infantry, and 60 pieces of cannon, with eight days' provisions in waggons, left La Carolina, and, descending from the mountains into the plains of La Mancha, marched partly by Daymel to the left, and along the high road to Madrid, through Valdepenas and

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Mansanares, towards the Tagus, in the following order:—the advanced guard, consisting of 2000 cavalry, were one day's march in front; then the seven divisions of infantry, with the reserve of cavalry and the head-quarters last. The army had no tents, marched from 20 to 30 English miles a day, and slept in the towns. The French, on its approach, retired across the Guadiana. About the sixth day's march, general Freire, who commanded the cavalry, and who always marched with the advanced guard, was very near surrounding and taking the French general of division Latour Maubourg, with 2,100 horse, at Madri-lejos. A serjeant of the dragoons of Alcantara, having deserted at night, gave the enemy intimation; and they had just time to get out of the town, when the Spanish hussars and dragoons attacked them at day-break, with great courage, and killed a great many. The army continued its march through Tembleque to Dos Barrios. For three or four days the Spanish cavalry were engaged in very spirited combats with the French cavalry, and always succeeded in driving the enemy. At La Guarda, the day before the army arrived at Los Barrios, the horse-grenadiers of Ferdinand VII., the regiments of Farnese and Pavia, sabred, for four miles, the dragoons of the French rear guard. No prisoners were taken on these occasions.

The army marched on Ocana. The march was

admirable, and the conduct of the cavalry brilliant; the infantry had not been engaged. Just in front of Ocana the French rear guard of the cavalry presented itself, and was charged. It opened right and left, and the Spanish dragoons came upon a regiment of infantry, who were drawn up against the town, which gave them a volley, killed 200, and took two pieces of cannon of the horse artillery: 10,000 French staid all night in the town, and retreated across the Tagus early in the morning, although 30,000 Spanish infantry *bivouaced* close to the town. The general-in-chief was with them, and must of course bear all the blame of this fatal inactivity.

The general, on quitting Carolina, said his intention was to march rapidly upon Madrid before the French could collect and concentrate their army; but his incapacity became soon evident. He delayed three days at Los Barrios. He then made a very dangerous flank march, by his right, parallel to the Tagus, to Santa Cruz de la Zarza, 20 English miles from Los Barrios. While the army remained at Los Barrios the cavalry was engaged every day. The royal carbineers distinguished themselves, particularly at Mora, on the left. At Santa Cruz the general threw bridges over the Tagus, and passed a division over. The army continued in this position three days. It had suffered much; the clothing was very bad. The long marches and wet had destroyed the shoes; half the army was bare-footed, but the

troops were in high spirits. Nothing can exceed the Spanish soldiers for long marches, and supporting hunger and privation of every kind. The French pushed their patrols of cavalry to within half a league of the town. The next morning the general drew out his army in order of battle. The rains had now ceased, but the French did not appear.

There is nothing more certain than that in war, as in morals, one error always begets another.

The Spanish general took the fatal resolution of quitting the mountains, which were behind him, and of going to seek the French, and give them battle in the plains, with soldiers half famished, badly armed, and imperfectly disciplined.

On the 18th of November the army marched from Santa Cruz back to Los Barrios. The greatest part of the army was ten miles in front of Ocana. Major-general Bernez and the cavalry arrived at Ocana at four o'clock in the afternoon. They found there the French general Paris, with 800 dragoons and Poles. About 400 Spaniards attacked them. The engagement was well contested: 400 or 500 men on both sides fell by the sword, among whom was general Paris, who was singled out and carried out of the saddle by one of the *lanceros* of Pavia.

The army *bivouaced* that night. The next morning the French army, which had been collecting some days, presented itself, having crossed the Tagus in the night. General Areyzaga drew out

his army to receive them. His disposition was bad. He divided it into two equal parts; one on each side of Ocana, which stands in an immense plain, and touching the town, both wings *en l'air*. This was bad, because, though it was easy to communicate before and behind the town, yet it divided the line. The ground fell a little in front, and there was a gentle slope to some olive plantations about two miles in front, behind which the French were, amounting to 48,000. There was another error in the disposition: the second line was too near the first, so that there was not room to rally the latter in case of disorder. Most of the cavalry were upon the right flank, in four lines; a vicious disposition, because they made little show, and were neither column nor line. The artillery was all stationed upon the flanks of each division, and was admirably served: the Spanish artillery is their best arm.

At seven o'clock in the morning the skirmishes of the Spanish army, under the young general Zayas, who commanded the advanced guard, and who is one of the most distinguished soldiers in Spain, attacked and drove back the French cavalry. Between eight and nine all the Spanish army was in order of battle, about 50,000 men, and the cannonade began on both sides. The French fired from a battery in their centre, diagonally, upon the Spanish right, and struck the cavalry often, who supported the cannonade for a long time with great steadiness and discipline. The French then

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advanced several strong columns from the olives, and marched towards the Spanish centre and right.

At this moment the Spanish general gave orders to the whole of the line on the right of Ocana to advance, and charge with bayonets; the cavalry moving on also in line with the infantry. The line advanced more than 200 paces. The French columns in the mean time deployed, and gave a great fire of vollies, by battalions, and grape, which checked the Spaniards. The French cavalry attacked the left, and were repulsed; but they entered with their cavalry the centre. They manœuvred under the fire of the Spaniards with several columns, and their cavalry shewed itself on their left. The 7th Spanish division, which was on the right of the infantry, and immediately next the cavalry, was thrown into some confusion, but often rallied, formed column, and returned to the attack. Two regiments of that division behaved nobly; the 1st battalion of the Spanish guards, and the 5th of Seville. They remained in line the whole time, floating backwards and forwards, but always facing the enemy. The guards, who were 900 strong, left 14 officers and 450 men on the field; the 5th of Seville had 450 in action, and about 80 have been accounted for. This is the regiment which so much distinguished itself with sir Robert Wilson at Puerto de Banos, and which is mentioned by him.

At length a French close column under marshal Mortier marched *au pas de charge*, broke the line,

and its head came equal to the second line of cavalry. At this instant the French deployed. A great many pieces of artillery in front of the cavalry kept up a heavy discharge of grape, supported by a line of infantry, and the cavalry advanced to charge the right of the Spaniards. The battle was now lost; in a few minutes the whole of the infantry on the right gave way; and the cavalry, seeing this, turned their horses to the rear. The whole of the left of the infantry stood firm, and cheered the general as he passed them; but without saying a word, except that the left should follow him, he quitted the field.

No effort was afterwards made to make the least stand. The whole army fled in the most dreadful confusion. A few squadrons attempted to form up, but gave way again. The rapid fire of the French, their shouts of victory, and the sound of the horses' feet (a sound terrible to the Spaniards in the plains where they have so often been cut to pieces), augmented the confusion. The cannon was abandoned, and the whole of it was instantly in the power of the French. The French cavalry found themselves in the midst of 30,000 fugitive infantry, who had no position nearer than La Carolina, and were obliged to traverse a plain more than 150 miles in many parts. The French did not pursue beyond the Guadiana.

It is impossible to ascertain what the loss on each

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side was. The battle lasted about five hours, and the troops were often very near each other, and sometimes mixed. Persons who have been on the side of the Tagus with the French say they lost 6000 men, but the number is probably exaggerated. It is certain that up to the battle they had lost 1000 cavalry. The Spaniards only saved four or five pieces of artillery, and hardly any baggage. The Spanish soldiers fought with great valour; but what folly to commit on a plain such young troops with veterans! Had they been in a position or in mountains, the battle would have probably had a different termination. The Spaniards cannot manœuvre under fire, which the French do with almost as much facility as on parade. The regiment of Murcia was cut to pieces. The Spanish loss was 5000 killed and wounded, and 15,000 prisoners.

Marshal Victor, who had crossed the Tagus at Villamaurique, pursued all night. At ten o'clock he overtook 800 Spanish dragoons at Sillo, twenty miles from Ocana, who were so fatigued, having been saddled thirty-six hours, and who had unbridled their horses, that they were all made prisoners.

General Areyzaga, on the first appearance of the enemy, mounted into the steeple of Ocana. On descrying the enemy he felt much alarmed, and now, for the first time, perceived what was likely to be the consequence of his rashness and presump-

tion. He went to the left, and before the battle was quite lost, he quitted the field*.

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As if to render this unfortunate affair the more signal, previous to the fatal march the baron de Crossard thus addressed himself in writing to the Spanish general :

“ Possessing too slight a claim to the confidence of your excellency, to be personally informed of your present and ulterior intentions, the situation of your army, that of the co-operating corps, and also that of the enemy, I can only form my opinion by what I see, and by the reports of those, whom every appearance concurs to accredit. If I am to confide in these reports, your excellency is resolved to march against the enemy, to offer him battle.

“ Upon this supposition, I should be unworthy of the confidence with which I have been honoured by the supreme governing junta of the kingdoms of Spain and the Indies, and also of your excellency’s esteem, if I had not, at the present moment, the firmness respectfully to submit to you the reflections suggested by that resolution.

“ Yesterday your excellency concurred with me

* When general Ariezaga quitted the field, lord Macduff, who had been constantly in the midst of the battle, anxiously entreated major general the marquis of Molespina, who commanded the horse, and was second in command of the army, to endeavour to retrieve the fortune of the day. At that instant the French cavalry broke the centre !

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as to the danger there would be in putting to hazard the affairs of your country, and of thus compromising the interests of Europe, so intimately united with those of Spain. You appeared to me to be sensibly impressed with the honour of delivering Madrid and Castile, by continuing the same grand movements by which you have hitherto driven the enemy before you; and seemed to be very little influenced by the glory of gaining a battle, the success of which is almost always owing more to chance than to the talents of the general; whereas the success acquired by movements crown his trophies, by attesting his genius. But as a battle is the last resource of a general, permit me, with a view to a just decision, to state the causes which authorize a recourse to the chances of an engagement. A general offers battle when he finds his supplies cut off, or obstructed; when, by a combined operation, he is sure of totally destroying the enemy; when, either from the quality of his troops, or the advantage of the ground, he possesses a manifest and decided superiority; when it is necessary to anticipate the arrival of reinforcements expected by the enemy, and whose junction would reduce him to an impossibility of keeping the field; when it is of importance to relieve a besieged place; when the consequences of a defeat can, in no case, countervail the advantages that would result from victory; in short, when his object cannot be attained but by a battle.

“ These, sir, if I am not mistaken, are the principal situations in which every thing may be abandoned to the hazard of a battle. But I am of opinion, that your excellency is in no one of these situations.

“ Having in your rear the most fertile provinces of Spain, and master of the main roads that lead to them, the abundance which prevails in your excellency’s camp banishes every idea of scarcity.

“ It is important, that a battle should be part of a combined plan between your excellency and the co-operating corps; but such a supposition, in the present case, would shew the absence of all calculation.

“ With the exception of the valour and good dispositions with which your excellency has been able to animate your troops, the superiority in all military points incontestibly belongs to the enemy.

“ By marching voluntarily against the enemy, your excellency yields to him all the advantages of a position which he will have studied in every respect, to which he will have adapted his evolutions, and where he will have distributed his artillery; whereas the march of yesterday has proved to your excellency the difficulty of putting yours in motion.

“ The same cause leaves your excellency as little hope of deriving any advantage from the services of your cavalry.

“ I conceive it a physical impossibility, that the enemy should be so speedily joined by reinforcements; otherwise, the government, in communicating such information, would have enabled you to be powerfully seconded by diversions on the part of the co-operating corps.

“ No besieged place expects direct succours from your excellency.

“ Troops newly formed, if beaten, present only the certain prospect of dispersion; and this risk cannot be counterbalanced by any hope of success.

“ The object of your excellency being the deliverance of Madrid and the Castiles, it is manifest, that, by continuing those manœuvres which are already drawing to a close, this object will be attained without, in any respect, hazarding the existence of the army.

“ If I now proceed to examine the advantages that may result from the gaining of a battle, in order to contrast them with the injurious consequences of a defeat, how easy it is to perceive, that the petty amount of the former can never compensate the enormous extent of the latter!

“ The evacuation of Madrid and the Castiles are the only advantages which I can discover in the gaining of a battle. Your excellency would not in vain flatter yourself, that, though fighting at the very gates of the capital, you should be powerfully aided by the efforts of the inhabitants; for if the battle of Talavera furnished a proof of the patriotic

attachment of those loyal Spaniards, it also demonstrated that very little is to be expected from their exertions.

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“ Your excellency cannot calculate on a superiority of numbers, on account of the rapidity with which the French constantly effect their junctions. Besides, certain English officers that escaped from the prisons of Madrid, have assured colonel Dillon, that the French considered this superiority of number as an element of disorder, upon which they founded a part of their hopes.

“ What evils would not, on the other had, flow from a defeat, which a river, fordable, it is true, but extremely confined, would render destructive ! Your excellency would in one instant lose your army—that army which is the hope of Spain, the focus of its forces, the school of its numerous levies, of which circumstances, now more than ever, urge and accelerate the formation, at a dead time of the year, appropriated to negociations. How dreadful the shock which this fatal blow might give to the political system ! If, by any chance, a portion of the troops co-operating in the Peninsula did not carry into their operations a spirit of unmixed and absolute good will, such portion would not neglect to lay hold of a legitimate pretext for retreating ; and from that moment the activity of the other corps would not only become useless, but would be even dangerous to themselves.

“ From this statement I conceive that your

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excellency will obtain the glory of delivering Madrid and your country, by continuing these movements, and by rigorously abstaining from committing yourself to the hazard of a general engagement. To effect this purpose, it would be sufficient that your excellency should proceed a few leagues farther to your right; and there, taking a position as near as possible to the left bank of the Tagus, you might employ all the means of nature and art to entrench yourself. From the point in question, you might push beyond the right bank of the river a strong advanced guard, to be supported by an intermediate corps placed in echelon. These two corps, which should likewise be entrenched, might, at pleasure, send out strong detachments in all directions, in front and rear of Madrid, and upon Madrid itself. In this situation your excellency might employ the right in making incursions as far the post of Guadarama, and by daily attacking the French, you would thus give confidence to the inhabitants of Madrid, dishearten and intimidate the enemy, obstruct his supplies, and give experience to the Spanish troops.

“ In this position it would be easy to wait for intelligence from the dukes del Parque and d’Albuquerque, to establish a communication with them by the most simple signals, and at length to terminate with success a manœuvre completely decisive.

“ But in the most unfortunate event, should your

excellency be attacked and defeated in your position, that could not happen until your excellency had previously made the enemy sustain the most sensible loss; and then, falling back upon Cuença and Valentia, and occupying, at pleasure, the chains of mountains leading into the four kingdoms, your excellency would be still formidable, even in defeat, and would powerfully protect your country.

(Signed) “THE BARON DE CROSSARD,

“Major in the armies of his majesty the emperor of Austria, knight of the order of Maria Theresa, and commissioner to the Spanish armies.”

To his excellency don Juan Carlos de Ariesaga, general-in-chief, &c., &c., head-quarters.

The discomfiture of general Ariezaga operated upon the Spanish generals, as the experience of defeat did upon their unsettled armies. We find that invariably the one beat down the other; though it is a fact in human nature, still to be accounted for, that new armies, or rather bodies of men, invariably arose, though their efficiency was not what was required.

“In consequence of the intelligence received by the duke del Parque, commander-in-chief of the army of the left, of what had happened to the army of La Mancha at Ocana, he made the necessary disposition for his retreat from Carpio, which he began on the night of the 26th of last month, and conti-

nued the whole of the 27th with the utmost order, as far as Vittoria and Cordovilla, where he halted in order to allow his troops some repose. On the same day, the 27th, at ten o'clock at night, he pursued his retreat with the same order as on the preceding day; and arrived on the 28th, at seven o'clock in the morning, at Alba de Tormes, without his march having in the least been obstructed by the enemy, although the French closely pursued him. He drew up his troops on the heights, which command that town on the right of the Tormes, and ordered part of them to take post on the other eminences, which also command the above town on the left bank of that river, in order to cover his rear-guard, the bridges, and shallows, where the depth of water was very trifling. In this situation the enemy attacked him in his first position; but was gallantly repulsed by our infantry and artillery. A body of French thereupon appeared on his right flank; and our cavalry, which, according to the general's orders, was to charge the enemy's horse, meanly retreated before it came within pistol shot; and although part of them were made to rally and return to their post, yet they took to flight again, abandoned the camp, and uncovered the right flank of the army. The enemy taking advantage of this incident, charged our first division of foot, which occupied that point, and although it made the most gallant resistance, yet it was at length compelled to yield to the superior force of

the French horse, who broke its line, notwithstanding the exemplary valour it displayed. The vanguard, posted on the left, sustained several charges of the same cavalry, but repulsed it three times, supported by the second division. At length it formed an oblong square, in which were don Gabriel de Mendizabal, second in command of the said army, and don Martin de la Carrera, commanding general of the vanguard, and in this it withstood the enemy's attacks with the greatest valour. A trumpeter was sent by the French to call upon them to lay down their arms; they listened not to this proposal, and continued their defence. In this state of things night came on, and the van and second division, availing themselves of it, were able to retreat by the heights on the left banks of the Tormes. The duke del Parque ordered thereupon the whole army to retreat in the direction of Tamamer, and this retrograde movement was accordingly effected with all the order that could be desired, until the following morning, when the army had arrived within a little more than two leagues distance from that town. A rumour flew through the ranks of the rear of the army, that the enemy was advancing in force to charge our infantry; this rumour, and a small party of dragoons which made its appearance, occasioned some disorder, and a considerable dispersion; and part of the same soldiers, who fought like heroes on the

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heights of Alba, threw away their firelocks, knapsacks, and whatever else they carried, to be able to effect their escape. The army then took a position in the mountains of Franza, where the dispersed troops rejoined their corps. In the action of Alba, the van, the first division, and part of the second, behaved with distinguished gallantry, and actions were performed by several officers, which prove uncommon intrepidity and spirit. The enemy's loss is stated, by the commander-in-chief, to be considerable; but that of our army was also great, for want of horses.

“ In consequence of the unfortunate action of Ocana, the supreme junta came to the resolution that their excellencies the marquis de la Romana and don Rodrigo Riquelme should proceed to the head-quarters in Carolina, with the most ample powers, to make, jointly with his excellency don Joas Dios Gutierrez Rare, who is already as commissioner with the army of La Mancha, for all such arrangements as they shall judge most expedient to repair the loss sustained, and prevent similar unfortunate events for the future. The marquis de la Romana having declined this charge, the supreme junta has appointed in his stead, his excellency the marquis of Campo Sagrado, and, ordered at the same time all the generals who are in this residence town, and in whom the said commissioners place confidence, to attend them, and

execute their orders in whatever branch of the service the commissioners may deem it expedient to employ them.

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“ The bridges of Almaraz and Arcebispo continue to be occupied by Spanish troops.”

For the more perfect view of the military state of the allies at this period, agreeably to the plan of the present collection of facts, as memoirs for the future historian disposed in a military point of view, the accounts of the enemy of the whole affairs are added, and it will be evident from them, that, notwithstanding its misfortunes, there was military merit in that army.

“ The Spanish army was drawn up in order of battle in several lines, the right and centre in the direction from Noblegast to Ocana, and its left extended beyond the latter town, which connected the different parts of their line ; a curtain, defended by a deep ravine, formed their position : the ravine extended from the town nearly to the extremity of their right.

“ Having reconnoitred the ground, I determined to make my attack on the enemy’s right. General Leval, who commanded the divisions of the duchy of Warsaw, and of the confederation of the Rhine, of the 4th corps, instead of general Sebastiani (who was charged with the general conduct of the cavalry), was ordered, in conse-

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quence, to attack the right of the enemy by turning the ravin. He made the first movement in column, by battalions; and the enemy's sharpshooters, who were in the wood, being driven out of it by his, he formed his line in compact columns, and in that order advanced upon the enemy, whom he attacked with great vigour and effect. A heavy cannonade began on both sides, and the enemy, menaced on his right flank, found himself obliged to engage with his front. Elated with the success of the first effort, the divisions of the confederation of the Rhine and of the duchy of Warsaw redoubled their exertions, and pushed the combatants upon their main body. It was there they had concentrated their forces; and the same ravine, turning round the town in the form of an ellipsis, again made its appearance in front of this new scene of action, and contributed greatly to their support. A considerable number of troops *d'elite* were placed in the ravin, and supported by batteries. Possessing superior advantages of ground and numbers, the enemy acted on the offensive in his turn, leaped over the ravine, and, protected by artillery in front, attacked the column of the 4th corps. At this moment general Laval received a wound, one of his aids-de-camps was killed, and two guns were dismounted.

“ The first division of the 5th corps, forming a second line, was following immediately in close columns, when I perceived a wavering in my first

line. I gave orders to general Girard, who commanded that division, to advance precipitately to the front, through the intervals of the first line. The troops under his command waited with impatience the signal to come to action. They march with celerity, pass through the intervals with precision, and engage the enemy's battalions with the bayonet.

“ The battalions of the 34th, 40th, and 64th regiments, deployed from their mass with great impetuosity, while the 88th, which was posted on the left of the line, continued to present their breasts to the enemy's cavalry, tempting them to make a charge. To the most tremendous discharges of artillery and musketry on the part of the enemy, our battalions, who had passed the point where our batteries were erected, reply only with a well-directed fire from a few ranks and demi-battalions. After several destructive rounds, which could not shake the courage of our intrepid soldiers, the enemy's artillery was attacked closely, silenced, and forced to retire in the rear of their line. Three places were abandoned on the point against which the 88th directed their efforts.

“ The impulse is given; the battalions of the 5th corps fly to the charge, advance from one success to another, and are supported by the battalions of the 4th. Our troops carry all before them,

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soon dislodge the corps of the enemy which was posted at the town of Ocana. A rapid change of front on the part of the 4th, succeeded by a charge, in which they were seconded by the 34th, forced the enemy to fly, at the same time abandoning their arms. This movement secured to us the victory. While these feats were performed on the left and centre, the division under the orders of general Desolles, composed, for the moment, of the half of the second brigade of general Gazan, half of the 55th and 58th regiments was stationed in front and on the right of Ocana, to keep in check the troops which occupied that town, and the enemy's left. The moment they were apprized of the progress made on the centre and left, the division crossed the ravine, and made a vigorous attack on the right of Ocana, and drove the enemy from that point with the greatest precipitation. Then the cavalry under Sebastiani was put in motion; it advanced with rapidity, and in an instant came up with the enemy, who, in his flight across the wood of olive-trees, endeavoured to make for Barrios and Guardia. In vain did he attempt to effect his retreat in square columns; his columns were broken. The division of light cavalry, composed of the regiment of pikemen, of the 10th hussars, the 10th and 21st mounted chasseurs, commanded by general Beauregard, cut down a numerous column on the left, and obliged 5000

men to lay down their arms, after having put to flight the royal carbiniers and about 3000 horsemen. At the same moment a brigade of dragoons, putting itself in motion, in the interval left between the 1st and 2d divisions of the 5th corps, charged a column of the enemy, which they immediately routed, compelled them to lay down their arms, killing a vast number with their sabres, and took several pieces of cannon. They pursued them at the point of the bayonet to Guardia; at every step prisoners were picked up; and in the evening 20,000 men, 50 pieces of cannon, and 30 stands of colours, were found in our possession.

“ Such is the result of this memorable battle, in which 55,000 men, composed of the best troops which the insurrectional government of Seville could bring together, and 80 pieces of cannon, could not resist 24,000 soldiers of his majesty the emperor.”

The consequences, as we have just observed of the one affair, soon gave rise to others.

“ The duke del Parque, not having dared to receive our attack at Carpio, and having resolved to retreat, carried his intention into effect very precipitately in the night between the 26th and 27th. The army was immediately put in pursuit of him, partly towards Trieno, and partly towards Cauta la Pudra, and the cavalry towards

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Pobido, on the road to Salamanca. At Vittoria we received certain information that the enemy had taken the direction of Alba de Tormes. Still we despaired of overtaking them, as they were ten hours in advance, and had already reached the foot of the mountains. But fortune reserved for us the opportunity of a decisive success. At noon general Lorcet, with 400 horse of the 3d hussars and 15th chasseurs, pushed forward, followed, at an interval of an hour, by the dragoons and by general Marchand, commanding the 6th corps. On arriving on the Almar, general Lorcet met the enemy's posts, and threw them back upon the town. All their army was found still there, posted, one part upon the right bank of the river, and the other part, with the whole of the cavalry, upon the left bank. General Lorcet, finding himself too weak, gave ground a little: the enemy took confidence from this, and was already advancing with the sharp-shooters of his cavalry and infantry behind the Almar. The second division of dragoons, augmented by the 15th and 25th dragoons, and four pieces of light artillery, came up at four o'clock. As soon as general Lorcet reached the left of the enemy, a general charge of the two brigades was ordered, and was executed with such vigour and promptitude, that in an instant the enemy's lines were broken in spite of a shower of grape and musket bullets. Their cavalry fled without exchanging a stroke of a sabre, and partly repassed the river.

The infantry was cut to pieces, and five pieces of cannon taken. There remained a second line of infantry. In the disorder into which success itself had thrown our cavalry, it could not continue its charge, and it returned at full gallop, destroying all that it had previously passed, till it came and formed itself a second time behind the brigades of general Carrie and colonel Ornano, which were advancing. The 15th and 25th were placed in column on the flanks to charge the enemy's cavalry, which had returned to the support of their infantry. This charge, which had for its object the breaking of the second line of the enemy's infantry, had the same success as the former; the enemy's cavalry took flight in the most cowardly manner never to appear again. Colonel Ornano, at the head of the 25th dragoons, took four pieces of artillery.

“ From that time there was not another cannon-shot fired, and the 25th dragoons found themselves on the rear of the enemy's line. They had time, however, to retire to a height difficult of access, and to form a square of from 3000 to 4000 men, In the mean time the night fell; there was no artillery nor infantry; the enemy was on the point of escaping across the ravines that bordered their left. General Marchand hastened the march of his infantry; it arrived running; but it had to climb a rocky mountain, and had already made a march of eight leagues; it had been in motion since four o'clock in the morning; it was now half past five

in the evening. At length the first brigade, commanded by general Maucune, arrived within 200 toises of the square at the same time with the artillery. It was night, and those who knew the position could scarcely distinguish the enemy above from below. General Maucune was placed in the proper direction, and notwithstanding the darkness, received orders to carry the square, and to enter the town. The brave infantry did not hesitate an instant; while it advanced, 15 or 20 cannon-shot were directed upon the square. At the first shot the videttes of the dragoons saw the enemy break, and throw themselves into the ravines, the soldiers throwing away their arms and accoutrements, in order to escape more rapidly. It was impossible for the cavalry to follow the fugitives. General Maucune, finding the enemy's position abandoned, pursued the column by the sound of confused voices. He arrived at the town at the same moment with the enemy: he entered resolutely; fell on the tail of the fugitives, without firing a shot, killed 200 men with the bayonet, and made himself master of the bridge, together with two howitzers. The night was so dark, that it was impossible to make any further movements; each corps rested upon its position. In a few moments we saw all the fires of the enemy upon the left of the Tormes extinguished. They all took to flight, in the most frightful disorder, in every direction, seeking safety in the neighbouring woods and

mountains. This battle, from its importance, and from the results with which it is likely to be attended, is one of those that do most honour to the French cavalry. Fifteen pieces of cannon, six standards taken sword in hand; a general, many colonels, and more than 100 officers killed; 3000 men lying dead on the field of battle, or in the direction of the pursuit; and 15,000 muskets taken or destroyed, are the trophies of this victory. We have made but few prisoners. The reports hitherto made, state but from 1,600 to 2000, among whom is a colonel of artillery. Our loss bears no proportion to that of the enemy. The total is but 18 killed and 57 wounded."

To complete, as far as may be, these documents, should be added, a letter from the general of division, Kellerman, as commander-in-chief, dated from Alba de Tormes the 29th of November, and communicating the flight of his enemy.

He computes the loss of the allies at 10,000 men, in killed, wounded, and dispersed, and feels not a little satisfied in announcing that 6000 muskets, (where were those who carried them?) were either taken, burnt, or otherwise destroyed. Of course they were part of the English supplies.

However this may be, it is certain that it gave, at the most critical moment, the most perfect confidence to the enemy;—a confidence, moreover, that

enabled him not only to look to the present moment, but to count upon ulterior advantages.

As Joseph Buonaparte, after the battle of Talavera, had discovered the expediency of giving full scope to the genius of marshal Soult, by an efficient command in his army, which produced the defeat of the Spanish general Areyzaga with 50,000 Spaniards on the *plains* of Ocana; so on the 20th of January, Soult with a chief command made a general attack on Sierra Morena. His head-quarters were almost immediately at Baylen, when he had soon opportunity to revenge the submission of his countryman, Du Pont, though he did not advance on his objects with that celerity which was to have been expected.

His passage through the defiles was daring enough, but fears of supplying his army precluded his taking due advantage of that unexpected movement.

General Sarazin has, rather incorrectly, seemed to attribute this to error, but there is little in the character of Soult to warrant such a supposition. There is much truth, however, in the other remarks which that officer has made. "If," says he, "instead of directing Sebastiani to Grenada, and Mortier towards Badajoz, he had marched them toward Cadiz with a bridge equipage to pass the rivulet of Santri Petri, the despatch in which he announced to Berthier the occupation of Anda-

lusia, might have been dated from head-quarters, Cadiz."

The irresolution of Joseph, however, still tormented Soult: unlike Louis XV. at Fontenoy, who permitted himself only to be considered as first aid-de-camp of marshal Saxe.

The supreme junta of Spain, however, had not any more been wanting in its exertions to meet the accumulating danger; and certainly in this instance its proclamation was by no means *vox et præterea nihil*; it candidly acknowledged that "*military skill*" had its share in ravishing the victory! but at the same time it very properly declared that it had not deprived Spaniards "of that valour which ultimately prevails over skill, and *subdues fortune*."

The supreme junta had come to a resolution, according to a decree of the 4th April, that all the effects of the churches not necessary to the performance of divine service should be immediately sent to the mint at Seville! and that a forced loan of half the gold and silver should be raised; that an extraordinary contribution be levied on all classes of the state; that all sinecures should be gradually abolished, and a tax on all carriages used in luxury raised; that the army should be reinforced by 100,000 men; for whom lances were immediately to be made; a loan opened in Spain of six million of dollars, and of forty in America.

These were large propositions. However, they did not end here. The whole Sierra de Morena was to

be inspected by the best engineers; all the *companies* commanded by different corps of the army were to be re-appointed by numerous officers *properly qualified*; and 100,000 poignards were to be instantly distributed through the provinces.

Nay, not merely was the future to be thus amply provided for; but the errors of the past were to be repaired; the arms flung away by the terror-struck peasantry were to be sought in the mountains, and commissioners were appointed to this effect!

The very words by which these operations were promulged, tempted one by an unlucky coincidence to recur to the "Abbé thirty thousand men" of Mercier; and to fear the permanence of this re-animated spirit. Nevertheless demonstrations of vigour ensued; the best positions in the Sierra, almost impassably fortified by nature, were secured; batteries were erected; trenches cut, and mines planted; the roads intersected; even the delightful labours of Le Maur under Hopida Blanca destroyed; and all prepared for a powerful defence: But, alas! at that moment were suddenly beheld among them the columns which had traversed the Alps and the Appennines, rushing through the passes of Puerto del Rey, pouring over the Col de Muladar, and dashing from the rocks of Despena Peros: the whole labour of trenches, the fire of batteries, and explosion of mines, were not even a momentary impediment; the Spaniards saw, and fled, astonished and bewildered, 6000 became pri-

soners; and the remainder either died on the roadside, or sought refuge in distant parts of the mountains. Ordnance, magazines, such provisions as had been collected, all fell into the hands of the French; they did not halt; the country was scoured by parties detached every way; the main body marched at once on Baylen, Jaen, Cordova, Carmona, and Seville; while the communications were kept open, and contributions levied in the rear. There was nothing to oppose it. 10,000 Spaniards, the wrecks of the army which had just been routed, urged their general towards Grenada just time enough to be fallen on by Sebastiani, who had been despatched by Soult to occupy Grenada, where the artillery from Badajos had been, as it was supposed, secured. The cavalry of Areyzaga alone escaped with him to Murcia.

Grenada was secured and provisioned for six months; and after receiving into the service of the emperor, as an act of lenity, a foreign battalion, which had on the defeat of Dupont formerly gone over to the patriots, pushed to Malaga, and thus nearly secured the whole of the southern provinces.

It is but just, however, to record the vain attempt of the veteran colonel Oballo to save his native city, and the bravery of the clergy and people in his support.

The colonel, assuming the government of the town, shipped off almost every individual (constituted authorities and all!) who was suspected of

being favourable to the French, and speedily trained the whole mass of the people; officering them from the monasteries, and giving the chief command to a Capuchin who had shewn great energy in the cause. With a van of 6000 men, and an immense train of artillery, they seized on the avenues and prepared to dispute them with the French, who were themselves surprised at the formidable array. In vain their infantry opened a heavy fire, the Spaniards were not to be moved; nor did a brisk cannonade disorder them. Impatient Sebastiani ordered an impetuous charge of the cavalry, and this only penetrated their ranks—after 1,500 lay dead in the field. The infantry rushed after them into the capital; and even then a brisk fire of musketry was opened upon them from the windows and house-tops, and only ceased when there was no hope in further resistance.

In the defence of places the Spaniards were wonderful; yet, alas! what a reverse did they often exhibit in the field.

The French, it would appear, now considered, or at least they affected to consider, Spain as perfectly reduced to obedience. The strain in which Soult communicates to the war minister, Berthier, from Cordova is of the most beautiful simplicity.

Jan. 27.

“ The inhabitants of Andalusia (says he) shew the best disposition possible; they remain all of them quietly at their houses, with the exception of some ringleaders of the insurrection. *Their coun-*

tenances are open and placid, and plainly indicate the utmost satisfaction at the termination of a terrible war, and the frightful tyranny of the juntas." The cortes about to assemble, he said, had dispersed; a ballot of one-fourth of the population, which had commenced, was at an end; the people were sick; and the king every where well received!

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King Joseph was far from being behind-hand with his general. He condescended to *reason*; and talked of the weakness of the old governments of Europe; in which he was assisted by general O'Farrel, a deserter from the Spanish armies. He, however, soon evinced further reasons to impress the Spaniards with the strength of his own; for on the 31st of January, Victor, with his advance appeared before Seville, and on the next day *his majesty* made a most triumphant entry into that city, which claimed, but did not obtain, a very distinguished respect.

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In a new and splendid proclamation, he determined on raising a third pillar of Hercules, and as before, seconded his eloquence by ordering his first corps with Victor (duke of Belluno) again at its head, to march on Cadiz.

And what was still more to shew a confidence in the Spaniards by whom he was surrounded, the fifth corps under Mortier (duke of Treviso) was also despatched against Badajoz, to communicate with Regnier, and observe the Tagus; leaving only one brigade for the support of Seville. And here

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we come to that politico-military question, which so much agitated the subject of Spanish alliance at the time, and on which, certainly differing from the popular idea, we have several discussions elsewhere.

Cadiz, however, was now the object, and here in fact the strength of parties was to be tried. General Castanos, of whom afterward such fruitless complaints were made, apprized the duke of Albuquerque, who in *disobedience of orders* made a sort of forced march, with 10,000 men, across the Guadalquivir, by Carmona, Utrera, Xeres, and Arcos, to Cadiz, occasionally falling in with the enemy and skirmishing with his cavalry: British troops were, though not admitted into Cadiz, permitted to enter the isle of Leon; and 1,200 men, with 1,200 Spanish to garrison Ceuta on the African shore. And the British auxiliaries were under the command of one, peculiarly destined, it should be conceived, for such a service, general Graham, of a warlike stock, who had been chivalrously promoted, and who, though a soldier of fortune, had none of the ordinary difficulties of soldiers of fortune to encounter.

Of the fortification of Cadiz at this period it is not here presumed to speak. It is a difficult subject; as is also that of the removal of the duke of Albuquerque from the command of his troops, in whose conduct has been described a degree of abruptness towards the junta, which would have been punished by the severest military penalties in this country.

When, however, a fact similar to the following is on record, it is easily to be accounted for, since it is thus that the proudest armies are undermined. The duke d'Albuquerque, in common with every officer who duly enters into military economy in his command, was annoyed by the destitute state of his army, and did not hesitate to remark on the extraordinary matter under which he suffered in the following terms:—

“Who would believe,” said he, *“that the junta of Cadiz should detain in its hands a hundred pieces of cloth, in the hope that by the management of the public revenue, they should put in their own pockets three rials per yard !”*

The cortes ultimately assembled, but unhappily too late to do justice to the merits of the duke d'Albuquerque.

In the interim he was considered, as all who without power are ardent in public affairs, or honestly eager for the public weal, are naturally considered, as *non compos mentis*, or at least unfit for ordinary exertion in that respect.

Here we may be said to bring to a close the campaign of 1809.

To ordinary views, nothing could be more hopeless than the idea of this second retirement of the British army from the fields of Spain. Not so with that army, which had by this time become consolidated; and greatly acquired, under its active and

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vigilant general, the qualities requisite to the great scale on which it was destined to act, almost for the first time. Lord Wellington seems to have fully possessed himself of the truth of that fact which has been dwelt on at some length in the first book of these memoirs—that Portugal was capable of defence at every point, even to Lisbon itself; and to have so imbued his men with it, as that they marched to the rear with the same steadiness as they would have marched against the enemy.

Among the legions of Rome, whose tactics were closely followed by the enemy, ethnical superstition would have produced, under similar circumstances, revolt and flight, scarcely to be remedied by any prodigy in their leader. The British general had the superior felicity of bringing his army into complete security, after an unavailing struggle in the offensive, with honour *and with satisfaction*, notwithstanding the thousand evils under which he laboured, including the bitterest that can afflict an ingenuous mind.—The sneers of the ignorant and the calumnies of malevolence fell before him, in the lines of Lisbon,

“ Like dew-drops from the lion’s mane.”

Quitting the painful task of censure, or the comparatively dull routine of recording the documents of office (highly essential nevertheless in their

place), we hail one of the finest operations of modern times, rising with more splendour from the accumulated circumstances under which it was effected, and conferring everlasting honour on the British army of the nineteenth century.

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